

FOR THE SAKE OF THE MISSION:
REFINING CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE ORDINATION

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To my wife, Maureen, and my children, Nathan, Justin, Zachary, Chelsea with thanks
for their loving support and sacrifice for my growth in ministry.

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	vi
ABSTRACT	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
The Challenge of Christian and Missionary Alliance Ordination	1
Worldview and the Study of Ordination	2
CHAPTER 1. ORDINATION AND THE BIBLICAL STORY	5
Prelude to Ordination and the Church	5
Ordination and the Spirit (Acts 1–2:41)	7
Ordination and the Local Church (Acts 2:42-8:3)	8
Ordination and the Regional Church (Acts 8:4-12:24)	10
Ordination and the International Church (Acts 12:25-chapter 28)	10
Ordination and the International Church Letters	13
Ordination and the Prison Letters of Paul	16
Ordination and the Pastoral Letters of Paul	18
CHAPTER 2. ORDINATION AND THE HISTORICAL STORY	21
The Early Centuries	21
The Middle Centuries	23
After The Reformation	25
The Present	26
CHAPTER 3. ORDINATION AND COMPARATIVE STORIES	36
Episcopalian	36
Reformed/Presbyterian	39
Wesleyan	42
Assemblies of God	44
Evangelical Free Church of America	46
Baptist	49
CHAPTER 4. ORDINATION AND THE ALLIANCE STORY	54
Recent Developments	54
Definitions	56
Pastoral Distinctions	58
Licensing Prerequisites	60
Credentials	62
Preparation	64
Ordination as Resistance	68

CHAPTER 5. C&MA ORDINATION STORY LEADER DIALOGUE:	
DISTRICT ORDINATION RESEARCH	69
Reasons for Conversation	69
Questions and Answers	70
Conversation Successes and Challenges	70
C&MA Story Participants	71
Story Leader Opinions	75
Story Adjustments	77
Multiplying Varieties	80
Dialogue Reflections	81
CHAPTER 6. ORDINATION AND THE CONTINUING STORY	83
Improving the Present Ordination System	84
Reasons to Multiply but Limit Categories of Ordination	85
Alternatives for Multiplying Categories of Ordination	87
Multiplying but Limiting Ordination Categories	88
Ordination plus Lay Professional	91
Further Enhancing Accreditation	93
The Recommendation Illustrated	95
More to the Story: Further Research	97
Back to the Mission	98
APPENDIX A. Ordination Research Questions	100
APPENDIX B. Ordination Research Compilation	103
APPENDIX C. Sample Code of Ministerial Ethics	115
BIBLIOGRAPHY	119
VITA	127

TABLES

1. Number of candidates for C&MA consecration/ordination	72
2. Number of C&MA candidates compared to past numbers	73
3. Comparison of present percentages of candidates who are not senior pastors to past percentages	74
4. How well a uniform policy utilizes time & resources	75
5. How well the uniform (singular) system of ordination presently utilizes time and resources	76
6. Openness to having varieties of ordination/consecration for differing types of ministry	78
7. How well a system of ordination/consecration that varies according to types of ministry would utilize time & resources	79
8. Number of preferred categories if the C&MA system of ordination/consecration varied according to types of ministry	80
9. Comparison of Present and Multiple Ordination Categories	88
10. Comparison of Present and Multiple Ordination Administration	89
11. Proposed Multiple Ordination & Lay Professional Models	92
12. Accreditation Simplification	94

ABSTRACT

Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA) ordination has long consisted of a Uniform Policy for every candidate. This singular system is producing friction in a changing ministry context. This paper examines the biblical, historical, comparative and C&MA story of ordination. It then engages in denominational dialogue through a survey of C&MA District Superintendents as to the possibility of multiplying ordination categories for varying types of ministry. The author then proposes multiple but limited categories of ordination together with a Lay Professional model in order to further the mission of the C&MA.

INTRODUCTION

The Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA) never intended to become a denomination. It began as a spiritual renewal movement to proclaim Christ worldwide. It was led by entrepreneurial leaders that brought Christians together from many denominations, believing that they could bring back the King (Matt 24:14). Ordination was assumed but not within a highly organized structure. Eventually the C&MA formed a denomination but, like today's movements, resisted being called one. As its growth continued, it was increasingly organizing behind the scenes, including credentialing new pastors and missionaries. Quality certification assured movement development until recently.

Alliance growth has flattened numerically and financially in the last decade. Like others, C&MA churches are in one of two extremes, either thriving or dying. As a result, the C&MA is questioning its structure, asking how to recover the characteristics of a movement as a large denomination. Of special concern is whether the C&MA is aimed well toward its global mission. This requires rethinking many procedures, including ordination.

The Challenge of Christian and Missionary Alliance Ordination

The C&MA has a diverse range of ministry candidates, but only one ordination procedure. Many denominations have a far more difficult entry requirement, namely, a denominational college or seminary degree after which a person is ordained. In contrast, the Alliance has unusually rigorous requirements after ministry appointment. This discourages existing and potential staff members, especially those who are not preaching pastors or from non-traditional backgrounds. The C&MA has one ordination track for every ministry position, from senior preaching pastors to staff members. This can inhibit some laity from serving to their potential, a stated key to denominational renewal.¹ A single route taxes diminishing resources in licensing,

¹C&MA President Gary Benedict, May 2007 C&MA General Council, Orlando, Florida.

training, and examining candidates who have differing needs. It exacerbates tensions for women and creates legal issues when ordination is delayed.

This thesis-project will examine the biblical and historical story of ordination which the C&MA joins. The study will compare the ordination stories of other protestant denominations. It will then consider the C&MA story of ordination, including research among district leaders about the possibility of varying types of ordination. It will conclude by exploring the possibility of developing different categories of C&MA ordination for varying types of ministry.

Worldview and the Study of Ordination

Worldview forms one's view of the church and its leaders. It answers life's big questions, namely, Who Am I?, Where am I?, What's Wrong?, What's the Solution?, and, What Time is it? The answers to these questions are, in turn, derived from the subject's storyline.²

This is why my context must be considered from the beginning as an Alliance pastor and former C&MA district staff member. My paternal grandparents were nurtured in their Christian faith by a C&MA church in New Jersey. I professed faith and was baptized in the Olivet Memorial Church (C&MA) where my parents were deeply involved as lay leaders in Brockton, Massachusetts. When I was twelve years old my father became a long-term lay pastor in an independent church which I began attending in Lakeville, Massachusetts. I continued worshiping as a student at independent evangelical churches including Moody Memorial Church in Chicago and College Church in Wheaton, Illinois. At Wheaton Graduate School I was struck by the connections between the churches while writing a New Testament Theology paper on the church in the book of Acts. At about the same time, *Habits of the Heart* by Robert Bellah convinced me that American church individualism is a cultural phenomenon. Because of these studies I decided to join a yet to be determined

²Craig G. Bartholomew and Michael W. Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2004), 12-27. Cf. Brian J. Walsh and Richard Middleton, *The Transforming Vision* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1984) and Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1997), 152-153.

denomination. I enrolled at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School because of its broad evangelical spectrum. I interned at a Baptist General Conference (BGC) church and took both the BGC and Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) polity courses. The C&MA church where I began serving as Assistant Pastor in Wheaton, Illinois “fit” well; its search committee wanted someone with a C&MA background, but not exclusively so because of its cosmopolitan setting. I learned to appreciate the denomination of my roots as one with strength in global outreach. Through my years of study and later experience I also grew to affirm the wider church, especially among evangelicals. Two of my brothers-in-law are ordained in the reformed tradition, including one that is a theology professor. I have worked hard to connect with others in the C&MA as well as the broader church. I am strongly committed to the wider church in both the denominational setting and beyond.

I was amazed that with a non-traditional background I later served in a C&MA district office. However, I believe that this is in the best of C&MA tradition which welcomes from a broad background for its common mission. I was soon astonished, even as one with administrative gifts, how cumbersome the C&MA ordination process was for denominational leaders. It was too much for District Superintendents to do alone. A large part of the process was carried out by administrative assistants. I met one of these from another district who rightfully spoke of well-known leaders whom she had pushed through the process. I became involved in nudging candidates as well and in trying to redesign the process in a transformational leadership development model in the New England District C&MA. This helped somewhat, but was restricted by national guidelines which became even more cumbersome during my tenure. This was frustrating as stagnating denominational growth called for attention to other areas. Healthier churches cooperated with the process but voiced frustration at the huge amounts of time and resources required for ordination, particularly for staff specialists from non-traditional backgrounds. We did all we could to facilitate the process. However, we were bound denominationally and legally to fulfill our national C&MA policy.

Even more important than my own story, worldview is why ordination must be considered within the Biblical story of the church. While rooted in the Old Testament and the gospels, the context of ordination and the Biblical story is primarily the book of Acts and related New Testament letters. Finally, worldview is reason to locate ordination within the history of the church. It also calls for comparing how the C&MA sets people apart with the traditions of others. We begin by examining the Scriptures.

CHAPTER 1

ORDINATION AND THE BIBLICAL STORY

Ordination is a practice which everyone practices but few write about. Those from high to low church comment that ordination is extra-biblical; this makes its prevalence even more ironic.

Much of what ordination is about comes together by agreeing on something that has been commonly practiced throughout salvation history. Ordination is a public act by which existing leaders set others apart for public vocational leadership on behalf of and for the benefit of the believing community. It is integrally related to the call of God, a sense by which all of His people hear His voice to know and serve Him. Within this call to all of God's people, He speaks to some to publicly serve him and his people vocationally.

Prelude to Ordination and the Church

At its core, ordination is a leadership rite which both Testaments describe. Patriarchs, priests, prophets and kings, which were spiritual leaders in a theocracy, were set apart for service with public initiation. After God appeared to him at the burning bush, Moses met with the elders of Israel (Exod 4:29-30). Aaron and his sons were initiated priests (Exod 28-29, Lev 6-9) with sacred garments, anointing with oil, sprinkling with blood, and 7 days of sacrifices. Service without public leadership was affirmed, but not with public initiation. Priests, but not craftspeople, though equally called, were ceremonially committed (Exod 29 & 31).

Moses appointed Joshua (Num 27:18-23, Deut 34:9) through the laying on of hands. God's Spirit empowered David, when Samuel anointed him with oil (1 Sam 16:13). At David's command, Zadok the Priest anointed Solomon King with the horn of oil, shouts of celebration, and music (1 Kings 1:28-40). Elijah put his cloak on Elisha,

setting up his public recognition (1 Kings 19:19, 2 Kings 2:13-15). Jeremiah sensed a call to public ministry from before his birth (1:5, 2:2).³

In the gospels, John the Baptist was initiated to ministry by angels before birth, like Jesus was (Luke 1). The ministry of Christ began at his baptism when He was publicly set apart by the dove-like descent of the Spirit and a voice from heaven (Luke 3). He later personally selected, appointed and sent out his disciples by his spoken word, apparently without the laying on of hands (Mark 1, 6, 10).⁴

Ordination is complicated by many things that have been associated with it in the Alliance and the church at large. Understanding leadership initiation can clarify it's the meaning of ordination since the church began.

The spiritual community, usually led by senior leaders, has recognized and affirmed those whom God calls to serve since the Patriarchs. It has sometimes been accompanied by a sense Divine calling from birth. Leadership initiation has been primarily related to those who serve fulltime, and for a variety of callings.

The laying on of hands has been the usual method of setting people apart for ministry, with some exceptions. It has been done by established leaders in the presence of and on behalf of the community, which thereby affirms the calling of leaders to service. The practice involves established leaders placing their hands on the head or upper body of the candidate, who is prayed for by one or more senior leaders.

Setting people apart before others has always been a part of public ministry. Existing corporate leaders differentiate between public and private service. The degree to which God's servants, including multiple team members, are publicly set apart correlates with the visibility of their ministry. This does not demean ministry without

³ Joseph Laecuyer, *What is a Priest?* (New York: Hawthorn Books, c1959); Thomas Oden, *Pastoral Ministry: Essentials of Ministry* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1983): 27-28.

⁴ Edward J. Kilmartin, "Ministry and Ordination in Early Christianity against a Jewish Background," in *Ordination Rites: Papers read at the 1979 Congress of Societas Liturgica*, edited by Wiebe Vos and Geoffrey Wainwright (Rotterdam: Liturgical Ecumenical Center Trust, 1980): 42f.

public leadership, but establishes what is public in its related setting. Enlargement of responsibility calls for different ways of publicly committing people to lead.

Ordination and the Spirit (Acts 1-2:41)

Jesus predicted a new kingdom chapter when he left. A new era in redemptive history began with the coming of the Holy Spirit to the gathered Jerusalem group. Today's church rises from the foundation of the apostles to proclaim Christ to the nations. The book of Acts shows the relationship of the kingdom of God to the expanding church. His kingdom grows as followers of Christ are empowered by the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-30, 32) to witness locally, regionally, cross-culturally, and internationally (Acts 1:4-8).⁵

The church began when the Holy Spirit descended, resting upon all 120 present with tongues of fire and enabling them to proclaim Christ in many languages to visitors from around the world (2:1-13). When Peter spoke to the crowd, 3000 repented, were baptized, and were added to their number (2:40-41).⁶ The church had little formal organization at first, and was led by the apostles. Without elected office, they were Holy Spirit-appointed with spiritual, ruling, and minimal, if any, initial legal authority. After the church was established through the written witness of the apostles, their office was no longer necessary. The informal structure demonstrated flexibility in appointing leaders.⁷

Early Christians introduced new leaders by adapting culturally appropriate, meaningful rites that furthered Christian proclamation. The influence of rabbinical practices upon the practice of ordination is unknown. Peter led the group of 120

⁵ George E. Ladd, *The Young Church: Acts of the Apostles* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1964), 13, 19, 23, 39, 43.

⁶ Ray. S. Anderson, *Ministry on the Fireline: A Practical Theology for an Empowered Church* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1993), 143, 201. Cf. George E. Ladd, *The Gospel of the Kingdom: Scriptural Studies in the Kingdom of God* (London: Paternoster Press, 1959), 117; George E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 342; & George E. Ladd, *The Young Church: Acts of the Apostles* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1964), 23, 54.

⁷ Ladd, *Theology*, 351, 353, 531; Apostle means "sent one."

believers, who considered Scripture, prayed for direction, cast lots, and replaced Judas with Matthias (Acts 1:12-26). They placed witness above structure.⁸

Pentecost invites the C&MA to join the story⁹ of the Spirit by making the writings of the apostles foundational to the church and its leaders. It encourages leadership initiation with meaningful ceremony that enlarges the local, regional and global church.

The developing church must adjust leadership appointment to further the mission. The C&MA continues the development of the first century by developing in response to the Spirit's work in the world, with mission superseding structure according to need and context. This is true for ordination. The flexibility of the church and the uncertainty of rabbinic influence calls for caution in reading Judaism too heavily into ordination practices. The descent of the Spirit grants flexibility in appointing leaders to further proclamation.

The C&MA has largely assumed common practices of like churches to initiate its leaders. However, it has adjusted, especially overseas, to further the mission. The Spirit also gives freedom in setting people apart at home. Worldwide proclamation must precede organization wherever the C&MA is found.

Ordination and the Local Church (Acts 2:42-8:3)

The new converts devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer. They sacrificially took care of each others' material needs, with a positive community reputation (Acts 2:42-47). The apostles amazed the people with miracles and message, demonstrating fearless allegiance to Christ. The believers continued to pray and to give sacrificially toward common needs (Acts 3-5).

Churches organized with variety according to presenting needs. The first formal structure began when the ministry grew, and a problem, the neglect of widows, led to

⁸ Lawrence A. Hoffman, "Jewish Ordination on the Eve of Christianity," in *Ordination Rites*, Vos, Wiebe & Wainwright, eds., 13, 21-23; William H. Willimon, *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*, (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 29.

⁹ Cf. Bartholomew and Goheen, *Drama*, here et al.

the office of deacon. This enabled the apostles to focus on praying and proclamation. By consensus, the group presented godly candidates to the apostles, who set them apart through the laying on of hands and prayer (Acts 6:1-6). Stephen's proclamation of Christ in salvation history showed strong character and biblical understanding, resulting in his early martyrdom and the concentric growth of the church (Acts 7).¹⁰

The C&MA church flexes to adapt to the ever-changing story of God's work among his people. Structure adapts to what God is doing in a particular settings. The C&MA joins the story of the church by preparing for leadership appointment. Godly character is a prerequisite. Leaders train to devote the church to the apostles' teaching, community, worship, and prayer. They learn to teach and live out the Scriptures, relating to the apostles, one another, God, and outsiders. They prepare to lead in Christ-centered, prayerful, worship and outreach. They prepare to help churches model community, a foretaste of what is to come. This includes the study and application of the Scriptures, including salvation history, and the practice and leadership of community, worship, and outreach. Leaders publicly affirm God's calling by setting apart some through the laying on of hands.¹¹

Everything, whether spiritual and material, is holy in God's sight. Ordination does not affirm a worldview that separates or elevates these areas apart from the other. When spiritual authority is recognized, it is for the sake of order. There are instances when ordination recognizes material ministry, because all is holy in God's world. When this happens, it includes biblical and theological study. As needs develop in growing churches, specializations are needed among those who are set apart for ministry of the word and prayer. While everyone is called to ministry in general, growing churches develop specializations, with some devoted to ministries of prayer and word, and others to care for people. Regardless of specialization, all leaders share a commitment to Christ, and ready to share his story with others.

¹⁰ Ladd, *Theology*, 111, 351-352 & Ladd, *Young Church*, 13; Harry Boone Porter, *The Ordination Prayers of the Ancient Churches*, (London: SPCK, 1967), xi.

¹¹ John Stott, *The Spirit, The Church and the World: The Message of Acts* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1990), 87.

Ordination and the Regional Church (Acts 8:4- 12:24)

Persecution forced the church into the larger province. Philip brought the good news to Samaritans and to an Ethiopian. When the apostles sent Peter and John to investigate, they placed their hands on the gentiles to receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 8). One of the church's greatest Jewish opponents became one of her greatest missionaries, the Apostle Paul (8:1-3, 9:1-31). Ananias placed his hands on and baptized him, and Barnabas presented him to the apostles in Jerusalem (9:10-19, 26-30). Peter then baptized an Italian military man, reporting that Gentiles were repenting (Acts 10-11). Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch, which was overflowing with converts. They were first called Christians, and demonstrated their new identity by giving to Jerusalem famine relief (Acts 11). Elders were mentioned for the first time (11:30), without explanation, apparently following the Jewish pattern. They seemed to assume responsibility after the apostles departed.¹²

As shown through the story of the regional church, the church is wider than the local congregation. It moves selflessly beyond social and geographical barriers. Potential leaders, whom God calls from wide backgrounds, are welcomed and baptized. This happens soon after conversion, uniting with others in Christ. Softened hearts (Ezek 36:26) partner widely, setting some apart of people for ministry.

C&MA churches have long called for death to self, which brings concern for needs that are beyond the individual person or church. Some sacrifice local comfort for regional ministry. A member of the author's congregation took early retirement to serve in an area church that could not otherwise afford a pastor. After several years of in-service training, he was ordained. Though his children have moved from the area, he continues to serve to further the gospel.

Ordination and the International Church (Acts 12:25-chapter 28)

When Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, they invited John Mark, whose mother had hosted their prayer meeting, to join them (12:25). The Antioch church sent Saul

¹² Ladd, *Theology*, 352 & Colin Brown, ed., *Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1975), Vol. 1, 199.

and Barnabas to Cyprus, with prayer and the laying on of hands (13:1-3). They proclaimed the uniqueness of Christ through Scripture in the synagogues, with John Mark at their side. Less than eighteen months after founding new churches, Paul and Barnabas appointed elders (14:23). They turned to the Gentiles when they were rejected, facing their opponents with truth and miracles (ch. 13). They incorporated the church structure of Jerusalem among the Gentiles.¹³

Reporting in Antioch (14:26-28), the church sent them to Jerusalem to meet with the apostles and elders to resolve lifestyle issues. Weighing reports and Scripture under the Spirit's guidance, they decided not to unnecessarily burden new converts with Jewish requirements. Judas and Silas stayed behind to teach and preach long term (15:22-35).¹⁴

The team divided when it disagreed over John Mark, who accompanied Barnabas back to Cyprus. With the blessing of established leaders Paul and Silas traveled to Syria and Cilicia. They invited Timothy, a multi-ethnic man with a good reputation, to join them in Eastern Europe as they delivered the Jerusalem decision (15:36-16:5).

At this point the early church and synagogue separated as Christianity developed its own identity (Acts 16-28). In response to a vision, Paul went to the province of Macedonia. He baptized Lydia and her household in Philippi. He was imprisoned with Silas for exorcising a demon from a slave girl, but was miraculously released. They went from Philippi to Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens, where, again, truth divided Jews and Gentiles (Acts 16-17).¹⁵

Paul taught God's Word and worked with Priscilla and Aquila in Corinth a year and a half. He then traveled to Syria and Ephesus, where he left them, then to Caesarea, finally returning to Antioch (Acts 18:1-22). Next he returned to Ephesus, where his

¹³ Geoffrey Wainwright, "Some Theological Aspects," in *Ordination Rites*, Vos & Wainwright, eds., 142; Ladd, *Theology*, 352, 532; Donald Carson, lecture (Deerfield, IL: Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, August 12, 1982).

¹⁴ Ladd, *Theology*, 354-55.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 540.

call for Christ's supremacy provoked a riot (Acts 19). He continued through Macedonia and Greece.

He left the Ephesian elders at Miletus with instructions to shepherd the church (Acts 20:17-38). While there, he Paul added new titles to his leaders. He used two terms, elder and bishop, to refer to the same office (20:17, 28). The term, elder, referred to seniority; while presbyter (presbyteroi), spoke of church oversight. At this point, there is more description than prescription of leadership terms, demonstrating further flexibility in church organization.¹⁶

The apostle continued on, preparing for death itself. In Jerusalem, James and the elders welcomed him back, with a full, detailed report of his Gentile mission. He followed their cultural advice, but was arrested nonetheless (Acts 21-22). At his trial, God told him that he would declare Christ in Rome (Acts 23-24). Paul even testified when he was shipwrecked on the way to the capital. When he finally arrived, he declared Christ and his kingdom from the Scriptures (Acts 25-28).

The C&MA joins the story of the international church through relationships that are wider than the regional church. Furthering a common mission, the church works interdependently to appoint leaders for new initiatives across continents. It listens to reports from elsewhere, enlists emerging leaders, and sends some elsewhere with prayer and laying on of hands. When the C&MA sets people apart for ministry, it continues the New Testament pattern of vocational leadership appointment. Church leadership, made up of diverse people, prays for world evangelization, preparing to send people out. Established leaders identify, mentor and nurture future leaders for local and distant vocational service.

The wider church ordains because of its larger, shared mission. As the church expands concentrically, its leaders are set apart accordingly, accomplishing more together than apart to expand Christ's reign. Leadership appointment becomes a

¹⁶ Brown, ed., *Dictionary of New Testament Theology* Vol. 1, 188, 199 and Ladd, *Theology*, 352, 532-533. Ajith Fernando, *NIV Application Commentary: Acts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998), 404.

function of the regional and international church, especially with respect to newer churches.

The church sends some of its most gifted ones elsewhere, because its Divine vision church surpasses local geography. When so done, the church identifies with those whom it sends and their mission. Congregations follow the Spirit by commissioning leaders to go to new areas, appointing them with prayer, faith in God's grace, and the laying on of hands. Established leaders seek others to bring along as helpers and partners beyond their own vicinity. Some stay long term, others short term.

Ordaining some as fulltime leaders of particular callings follows the pattern ministry differentiation. There are varieties in local, regional and international callings. Differentiation among leaders is made beyond that which is internal to the local church as some are set apart for international ministry. The boundaries of contextualizing leadership appointment are defined by conversation with the wider church which, in turn, admits its dependency on both the Spirit and human wisdom. As churches mature, this is done in partnership, with older and younger churches generously working together to advance the gospel. On some occasions, the spiritual longevity of leaders is relative to the age of the congregation itself. Where there are differences of opinion, common sense prevails. All of this points to varieties of ordination.¹⁷

Ordination and the International Church Letters

Galatians (especially related to Acts 9 & 15)

Gentile and Jewish Christians conflicted over circumcision, openly criticizing their founder, Paul. He defended his apostolic calling as divine from birth and focused on Gentiles (chapter 1-2). Paul insisted on authority recognized by all the churches. However, at this point, it was a "...spiritual and moral suasion, not a formal and legal" authority, as demonstrated at Jerusalem.¹⁸

¹⁷ D. Carson, lecture.

¹⁸ Ladd, *Theology*, 532.

After three years of seclusion, Paul met with Peter and James in Jerusalem (1:18-19). James, Peter and John, the recognized leaders of the church, greeted, met with them privately, and gave direction regarding circumcision (2:9-10). These were recognized leaders among the twelve.¹⁹

Some differentiation began among leaders. Paul identified himself as apostle to the Gentiles, and Peter, with whom he disagreed in Antioch (2:11-14), as apostle to the Jews (2:8). James was the first bishop, pastor, or at least, leader among leaders of Jerusalem. It is unclear how James' leadership interacted within and beyond his own congregation, but it included some kind of formal or informal representation (2:12; cf. Acts 15:1).²⁰

Thessalonians (Related to Acts 17)

Due to persecution, Paul had quickly left the church behind which he and his team had founded (17:1-9), showing his confidence in the Spirit to build his people.²¹ Thus it was a church fresh from paganism, without basic instruction. From Corinth, he wrote both letters in rapid succession. Paul began by thanking God for the Thessalonians, who had imitated the founders' example (chapter 1). He defended his gospel-entrusted ministry as not burdensome (2:3, 4, 9). With integrity and humility, he only wanted to please his Lord. He had tender, family-like relationships with new converts. He called himself an evangelist, pastor and teacher (or pastor-teacher; 2:1-12; 3:6-10). Ministry brought both suffering and joyful rewards (2:13-20). He sent Timothy to encourage and strengthen them (3:1). Paul instructed them in sexuality, continued love for each other, and honor for hard-working public leaders (chapter 4; 5:13).²² Their identification as leaders supports the practice of prior preparation, and initiation of ministry candidates.

¹⁹ Ladd, *Theology*, 351.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 532, 534.

²¹ Don N. Howell, *Confidence in the Ethos of the Pauline Mission*. *Trinity Journal* 17NS, 1996, 205.

²² C. Donald Cole, 7th Annual Pastors Conference, Moody Bible Institute, 1979; Donald Carson, lecture (Deerfield, IL: Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, August 17, 1982).

Corinthians (Related to Acts 18:11)

Paul founded a church in an immoral city on the seacoast of modern Greece. He addressed reported leadership (1 Cor, chaps. 1-4), practical, cultural and worship issues (chapters 5-14). He sent Timothy to remind them to imitate his lifestyle (4:14-17, 11:1). The body was one, made up of many parts, with differing gifts (12:12f). Apostles, prophets, teachers, workers of miracles, those with healing gifts, administration, and tongues were among its gifts, all of which were subservient to love (12:28-13:13). All gifts were to be used for church edification (14:1-25). Differences in prominence were acknowledged for the functioning of the body, with Christ as head. Leaders were to compensate for individual differences by honoring the less visible.

In 2 Corinthians, Paul responded to reports about his ministry (chapters 1-7). He was personally invested, citing his own example and especially the example of Christ (chapter 4). He addressed the question of delayed giving for Jerusalem (chapters 8-9), and defended his apostleship (chapters 10-13).²³

Peter

The Apostle Peter, exhibiting his view of the wider church, wrote a letter which was circulated to eastern European congregations. Scattered by persecution, God's elect were strangers throughout the Empire (1:1, 17; 2:11). The date of writing is late, revealing developing church structure (5:1-7). Paul encouraged Christians to live in light of their hope and inheritance (chapter 1), for God's glory (chapter 2) and harmoniously together (chapter 3). He wrote about serving, suffering (chapter 4), and church life (chapter 5). Elders were to shepherd with integrity for the sole pleasure of the chief shepherd (5:1-4).

The C&MA joins the international church letters by enlarging ownership (Rom 12:15) for God's work. These accounts, like the regional (Acts 8:4-12:24) and international (Acts 12:25 to Acts 28) narratives, reminds the C&MA that the church is

²³Frank E. Gaebelin, ed., *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982); Calvin Seerveld, "Our Lives as God's Letters of Reference" *Perspective* 29 (June 1995): 6-7.

wider than the local congregation, with regional and international expressions. Like the local church, the wider body operates as a unit with varying gifts that recognize and affirm differences. Ordination is addressed together for the good of the wider church. C&MA ordination is a district function that joins churches as one body. The sending church prepares International Ministries candidates, operating as a worldwide missionary church.

The Apostles compel the C&MA to prepare leaders to steward the gospel through evangelism, shepherding and teaching. Ordinands must learn to develop joyful, and personal, even family-like, congregational relationships. Future leaders are instructed to wrestle for their congregations, helping them to surpass their own examples. Those appointed to pastoral leadership must learn to assist the chief shepherd, with pure, eternal motives. Some are senior leaders for the sake of order, but must be so with no personal superiority because all submit to Christ.

Future leaders practice pointing to Christ first, church second, even at cost. While those in fulltime ministry are generally paid for it, they learn neither to heavily burden congregations, nor to be surprised at suffering. Even celibacy, though not required, can enhance ministry. Specializations and leaders of leaders among churches call for their initiative in appointing leaders on behalf of the wider church. These leaders are, however, flexible and responsive, especially when God is working in new settings. The C&MA must adjust to changes in the ever-developing church as it sets apart new leaders.

Ordination and the Prison Letters of Paul

Ephesians (Related to Acts 19:8-10, 20:17-20)

Paul called the church he founded to fulfill its God-given vision. He described the church, saying unity flows out of the blessing of the Father, who selected a family to exemplify his control of the universe (chapters 1-3). He concluded by saying the church lives in community, as described in Romans (chapters 4-6). This means unity, with apostles and prophets the foundations as the givers of revelation (3:5). While every apostle was a prophet, not every prophet was an apostle. Together with

evangelists, and pastors/teachers, they were gifts to the church. The measure of maturity was the body become self-building, united in Christ (4:11-13). Home and work relationships, he said, were miniatures of church relationships, all in mutual submission to Christ (5:15-6:4).²⁴

Colossians (Possibly related to Acts 19)

Paul wrote to a congregation whose confused view of Christ had distorted its witness. He painted a new picture of Christ as the magnificent head of the universe (chapters 1-2). Paul proclaimed Christ through teaching and preaching, bringing everything under His headship (1:20, 28). This global proclamation either freed people to join God's kingdom or bound them in darkness of the continuing cosmic battle. Leaders must learn to enable the church to unleash the power and freedom of Christ (Matt 16:19).²⁵

Philemon (Related to Colossians)

Paul wrote Philemon in Colossae to take back his newly converted slave, Onesimus. The letter was to be read publicly, a record of Christian liberty and of Onesimus' story. Onesimus may have helped publish Paul's writings as the Bishop of Syrian Antioch.²⁶

The C&MA joins the story of ordination as expressed in the prison letters by submitting to the guidance of the larger body in setting apart new leaders. Working together in this way fosters the sharing of responsibility among churches to proclaim Christ, building maturity in congregations for His pleasure. This expresses unity, answering Christ's prayer that we be one (John 17). It also fleshes out the images of one temple, body, family, and bride. Reflecting unity within the trinity, working among churches to ordain gives witness, moving us toward uniting everything under Christ.²⁷

²⁴ Ladd, *Theology*, 535.

²⁵ Ladd, *Gospel*, 116, 121.

²⁶ F.F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), 396f.

²⁷ Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1985) 1130f.

The prison letters portray ordination as built on the church as a household of faith. Christ, the cornerstone, unites its varying building blocks, with the apostles and prophets its foundation. Some are set apart as evangelists to lead new initiatives, relationships and churches. Ongoing shepherds and overseers of the flock are designated pastors and/or teachers, called to equip God's people for works of service. From the pastoral letters, it is not yet clear whether these are the same as those that are designated as those that are leaders among churches (presbyteroi/episkopoi).²⁸

Ordination and the Pastoral Letters of Paul

Titus (Related to Acts 28)

Having delivered Paul's messages to Corinth, Titus carried his gifts to Jerusalem (2 Cor 2, 7, 8, 12). Paul wanted the character of new churches to contrast with Cretan decadence among leaders (chapter 1), various groups (chapter 2), and within the community. Paul called for lives that reflect Christian faith. He asked Titus to teach varying age groups to live out their faith with age appropriateness and example (2:1-15). Integrity was stressed in outside relationships, motivated by grace (3:1-7). Paul told Titus to avoid time-wasting subjects (3:8-11), predicting that someone else would take his place in overseeing the churches (3:12-15). Church structure was emerging beyond Paul's general letters. Again, he used interchangeable terms for elders and bishops or overseers.²⁹

1 & 2 Timothy

Paul took Timothy under his wing, appointing his traveling companion over the church. Like the letter of Titus, warm relationships were evident both within the apostolic team and between that team and the congregation. In his first letter, Paul told Timothy that love meant silencing false teachers (1:3-7). Timothy was to encourage prayer and orderly worship (chapter 2) and good leadership reputations (3:1-13). All elders were to lead, while some were to also preach and teach (3:1-5, 5:17-22). Paul urged Timothy to avoid needless controversy as an example to others (4:7). He was devote himself and his gift to devote himself to public Scripture

²⁸ Ladd, *Theology*, 533.

²⁹ Ibid, 352, 532-533; Donald G. Bloesch, *The Church: Sacraments, Worship, Ministry, Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2002), 205-206.

reading (4:11-14). He was to treat and lead people in respect and generosity (5:1-16). Paul called for quality elders, some of whom would be compensated, and all held publicly accountable (5:17-20). Paul warned Timothy to only lay on hands cautiously (5:22) with eternal vigilance and strong stewardship (6:12, 20).³⁰

Paul began his second letter by urging Timothy to fan into flame the gift of God, which was in him by the laying on of hands (1:6-7). Against his natural timidity, he was appointed a herald and an apostle, identifying with Christ and Paul (1:8-12). Timothy was to multiply in others what he'd received (1:2, 13). He compared ministry to serving in the military, on the farm, and the athletic field, saying that the worker is appropriately compensated (2:3-7). Timothy was to present himself to God without apology, well-prepared to handle God's word (2:15). He was to live an exemplary life, with Scripture-informed relationships with friend and foe (2:16, 22-26). Paul told Timothy to be Word-centered, preaching it everywhere and always, positively and negatively, strongly and patiently (4:2). He was to be tough and work hard in evangelism and in everything (4:5).

The C&MA follows the pastoral letters by appointing some to specialize in preaching and teaching, further differentiating between church ministries. Leaders improve their gifts which sometimes come through the laying on of hands. They learn to lead prayer and orderly worship, including Scripture reading. Preachers and teachers especially study their primary tool, the written Word, and others that help them interpret it.

The leadership appointment of the pastorals calls for leaders of the highest integrity, with consistent, Christ-like, character. Leaders are both heavenly-minded and earthly-good, fully embracing, living-out and proclaiming the gospel everywhere. Future leaders discover how to shepherd the church with selflessness (Mark 10:33-45), guidance, and Divine commendation, just as Christ shepherds his flock (John 21). This includes developing strong congregational relationships. They prepare for

³⁰ Tom Thatcher, "The Relational Matrix of the Pastoral Epistles," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 38 (March 1995), 41-45; Brown, *Dictionary*, Vol. 1, 188, 199; Ladd, *Theology*, 352, 532-533; cf. Acts 20:28.

hardship, accountability, and reward. They will find things in common with the soldier, farmer, and athlete.³¹

The C&MA joins the story of the church by initiating leaders for public ministry as a function of the wider church. Existing leaders identify, train and set apart potential leaders on behalf of God's people. This is done with a view to growing Christ's kingdom in his church locally, regionally, and internationally. Material, spiritual and geographical specializations call for differences in setting people apart, with flexibility according to culture, within biblical boundaries.

The story continues as the C&MA church develops according to God's plan and empowerment. Building on the past, the creativity of God does new things as he develops his church through its equipping leaders. "Moving ever closer to this last century, the church expects the kingdom of God to be present in ever new and renewing ways."³² Its mission is to join God's continuing creation of the church's future, not to recreate the past of Jerusalem or the place where the C&MA was founded, New York City. The church develops in response to the Spirit's work in the world, with mission superseding structure based upon need, and context, within the bounds of Scripture. This is true with respect to ordination.

We have followed the story of ordination in the Scriptures from Moses to the gospels, through the concentric growth of the church in the book of Acts, and its further expression in the writings of the apostles. There is is much that occurred from then until the founding of the denomination in 1887. The C&MA joins a rich continuing story of God's work in his church throughout the centuries.

³¹ John Stott, *The Contemporary Christian* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1992), 345.

³² Anderson, *Ministry On the Fireline*, 125

CHAPTER 2

ORDINATION AND THE HISTORICAL STORY

The church continues a rich story of ordination, evident in almost every denomination, since New Testament times. Even the sometimes controversial Old Testament syncretism of early and medieval ordination rites can “set the Christian ministry in the line of salvation history which is now being continued and expanded in and through the church.”³³

The Early Centuries

By the second century, Ignatius reports that the bishop, expressing unity and continuity, assumed authority and responsibility for ordaining deacons and presbyters. Cyprian, a disciple of Tertullian, developed the episcopate to respond to heresy. In the early centuries, the responsibility for ordination thus moved from congregations to regional leaders, to the pope. Major ceremonial elements were initiated.³⁴

The third century prayer of Hypollitus is the earliest existing written record of ordination and has been instructive for centuries. William Willimon suggests that this ancient prayer presents ordination as an act of Christ and his church, as well as service to Christ and the church. Also, he says, it arises both from above as a gracious gift of the Holy Spirit and from below from the church’s need for, and wisdom in designating, leadership. Ordination, further, shapes those who are to serve as priests to priests, while setting apart those who model to the others. Finally, the

³³ G. Wainwright, “Some Theological Aspects,” in *Ordination Rites: Papers read at the 1979 Congress of Societas Liturgica*, edited by Wiebe Vos and Geoffrey Wainwright (Rotterdam: Liturgical Ecumenical Center Trust, 1980), 130.

³⁴ Gerald Ellard, *Ordination Anointings in the Western Church Before 1000 A.D.* (1933; repr., New York: Kreaus Reprint Co: New York, 1970), 104.

laying on of hands and prayer expresses unity. This ancient prayer speaks of the leadership gift, with little forecast of coming clergy distinctions.³⁵

The First Council of Nicea (325 AD), remembering I Timothy 5:22, cautioned that ordination not be done quickly, but with care. At first, Christians selected pastors from among their leaders. Then it became a career choice, affirmed by their peers for advancement after training. This brought anointing, presenting of vestments and utensils, charges, and exhortations. Emperor Constantine (306-337 AD), the first statesman to recognize the church, ushered in privileged clerical status. As it grew in political power, processions and ceremonies developed as some of the ordained sought governmental positions.³⁶

Upon ordination, some came to believe that a person's character was changed in essence, beyond what was possible for a layperson. Like transubstantiation, the change was beyond the naked eye. According to St. Gregory, Bishop of Nissa (372-95 A.D.), through ordination "... (the priest's) invisible soul, by an invisible power and grace, is transformed into a higher state." A priest was given special grace to consecrate the mass, conveying the grace of Christ Himself at the Lord's Table. This became eternally significant, the only way to obtain grace. This belief continues among Anglo-Catholics, a major difference in ordination theology.³⁷

Augustine (354-430 AD) wrestled with the question of whether a person could receive a worthy baptism from a hypocritical priest. He chose to distinguish between the authority bestowed by ordination as compared to that derived from faithful living. Augustine believed in eternal appointment, continuing regardless of spirituality or

³⁵ William H. Willimon, *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*, (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 29-53. Cf. Porter, *Ordination Prayers*, xi, & *Book of Common Prayer* in James C. Fenhagen with Celia Allison Hahn, *Ministry for a New Time: Case Study for Change* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, c1995), 49.

³⁶ Porter, *Ordination Prayers* in Fenhagen, *Ministry for a New Time*, 78; Thomas C. Oden, *Pastoral Theology* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1983), 20; Michael C. Samson, "Doctrine of Ordination and the Ordained Ministry," *Churchman*, 96 (1982): 12; H. Bettenson, ed., *Documents of the Christian Church*, 2nd ed. (London, Oxford, 1963), 17-19; Willimon, *Pastor*, 36.

³⁷ Joseph Laecuyer, *What is a Priest?* (New York: Hawthorn Books, c1959), 15 & various; Ludwig Ott, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, eng. ed. by James Cano Bastible, trans. by Pastrick Lynch (St. Louis, MO: B. Herden, 1958), 341; *Theological and Functional Dimensions of Ordination: With an Official Position Paper on the Assemblies of God View* (Springfield, Mo: Gospel Pub. House, c. 1977). 6-7, 10; cf. Louis Berkhof, *The History of Christian Doctrines* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1937), 236.

even gross failure. He believed that the pastoral position in itself carried a certain weight of authority.³⁸

Historically, the ceremony, like baptism, confirmation, and last rites, included anointing with oil, especially in societies where oil was commonly used. Anointing with oil gradually was identified with ordination itself. From 700-750 AD, the Franks and the Gauls anointed the hands of bishops, but not of priests, while the French anointed the hands of priests, but not of bishops. The practice was not widespread, except in southern Germany during the next 100 years. However, from 950-1000 AD, as the church rose in power and ceremony, the bishop's thumb, head, and hands were anointed in Rome. The Celts also, apparently, anointed ordinands with oil.³⁹

The Middle Centuries

The church created varieties of ordination, namely, the diaconate, presbyterate (pastor, elder or priest) and episcopate (bishop). Congregations affirmed candidates through the laying on of hands and prayer offered by the whole church, with a bishop presiding.⁴⁰

It was inferred that, upon ordination, clergy were given a special gift, and so, become distinct in essence from others. This changed ordination from a function within the believing community to a change in nature. Clergy were further separated in perceived purity from laity, with promises for the priesthood of believers were relegated to priests alone. This came through mingling the concepts of kingdom and church. Theologians read Old Testament priesthood into ministry, adopting celibacy and virginity laws. Through ordination, the priest became the only one permitted to consecrate a mass. The Fourth Lateran Council (1215 A.D.), made ordination a sacrament.⁴¹

³⁸ Willimon, *Pastor*, 35; Joseph Lecuyer, *What is a Priest?* 15-16.

³⁹ Ellard, *Ordination Anointings*, 20-21, 30, 33; Porter, *Ordination Prayers*, xiii, 79.

⁴⁰ Porter, *Ordination Prayers*, xii. Cf. Willimon, *Pastor*, 29.

⁴¹ Willimon, *Pastor*, 42-43, 47; Ott, *Fundamentals*, 450; Berkhof, *History of Christian Doctrines*, 232-3; William H. Willimon, *Calling and Character: Virtues of the Ordained Life* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2000), 10.

The reformation principle of the priesthood of believers disagreed with the teaching of the Middle Ages. This created a natural tension between affirming believers and designating leaders. Luther states, “There is no true, basic difference between laymen and priests...except for the sake of office and work, but not for the sake of status”. He did not believe that family and ministry callings were exclusive, the reason for Roman Catholic celibacy. He interwove family and ministry in a new institution, the pastoral family.⁴²

Nevertheless, Luther continued to practice ordination as a means to a common end. He believed in equality of all believers before God, but also in designating quality leadership for the sake of order. Reformation pastors equipped their people to reach the world. He hesitated to allow laity to administer baptism or the Lord’s Table. Reformers unanimously condemned the ordination prayers of the Middle Ages. The Reformation had made preaching the purpose of the ministry, not the mass, which did not require a pulpit. Luther reacted against perceived pastoral laziness by exchanging traditional vestments for the black academic Geneva gown.⁴³

Reformers disagreed about the permanency of ordination. Luther believed that it could be removed, only unique in its office. Other reformers, except for independents, viewed ordination as permanent because they saw it as a calling to the church at large rather than to a particular church. Puritans later ordained according to the number of vacancies, unlike the Church of England, which alone did so regardless of the number of vacancies.⁴⁴ Reformation theologian, Martin Chemnitz (1593 A.D.), described ordination as a way of giving public approval and declaration of God’s call by the church; formal commitment of ministry to the candidate; commitment by the

⁴² Quotation in Willimon, *Pastor*, 43; also 44; Willimon, *Calling and Character*, 27;

⁴³ Willimon, *Pastor*, 41, 43-44; P. Bradshaw, “The Reformers and the Ordination Rites,” in *Ordination Rites*, Vos and Wainwright, eds., 94f. 100. Cf. John Theodore Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1934), 580.

⁴⁴ P. Bradshaw, “The Reformers and the Ordination Rites,” in *Ordination Rites*, Vos and Wainwright, eds., 94, 100. Cf. Willimon, *Pastor*, 41 and John Theodore Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1934), 580.

candidate to faithfulness; authority to preach and commitment of the ministry to God.⁴⁵

After the Reformation

The heirs of the Reformation gave candidates a thorough examination, frequently public. Questions covered preaching ability, doctrine, morality, and spirituality. Calvinists examined Greek and Hebrew abilities, reacting against priests who read Latin without understanding. Anglicans often had less rigorous and more private proceedings. Ordination was practiced as a function of the whole church, except in the Church of England, where bishops were more involved, because of concern about Puritan candidates.⁴⁶

Those who affirmed a priestly hierarchy especially grappled with the clerical relationship to lay leadership. A strong, hierarchical, royal connection between the Old Testament priesthood and the clergy conflicted with the priesthood of the believers. However, the Reformation's emphasis on believer's priesthood, based in a theology of baptism, challenged the church to affirm the ministry of everyone without diminishing the doctrine of ordination.⁴⁷

Taken to an extreme, this leads to clergy wondering whether they are even necessary. For the high church, the only unique functions remaining for the ordained are the Eucharist, blessing pronouncement, and absolution.⁴⁸ Low church clergy are left with only the ordinances of communion and baptism and, perhaps, preaching.

A minority completely eliminate ordination. The late Marjorie Warkentin, of Brethren background, wrote an extensive biblical and historical analysis of ordination. She concluded with the rare opinion that ordination should be abandoned because it so divides the church. The anointing of God's Spirit at baptism, she said,

⁴⁵ Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, 31.

⁴⁶ Bradshaw in *Ordination Rites*, Vos and Wainwright, eds., 101-2; cf. Wainwright in *Ordination Rites*, Vos and Wainwright, eds., 143-45.

⁴⁷ Lecuyer, *What is a Priest?*, various; Ott, *Fundamentals*, 276, 341; Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, 26; James C. Fenhagen, James C. with Celia Allison Hahn, *Ministry for a New Time: Case Study for Change* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, c1995), xii-xiii.

⁴⁸ Telephone Interview with Scott Harding, Church of the Messiah, Glens Falls, N.Y., 12-2-05.

is enough.⁴⁹ One reviewer, while acknowledging her concern, suggests that she not abandon the entire concept.⁵⁰

C&MA ordination flows from the story of the church in Scripture and its continuation through history, especially as found in the Reformation. The protestant church at large holds many shared convictions about ordination.

The Present

The C&MA shares many ordination definitions and practices with others, especially in the free and congregational church traditions. Identifying these commonalities is foundational to consider the unique challenges of the C&MA in setting people apart.

The Nature of Ordination

The C&MA joins the protestant church in how it associates ordination with the believing community. The church's continuing story of ordination places clergy within, not apart from, the realm of other Christ-followers. The tension between designating leaders and affirming the priesthood of believers is addressed by viewing ordination as a subset of setting apart people for ministry. The pastor "is not 'set apart' from the community of faith to serve it, but 'set within' the community of faith as one who ministers to and is ministered to within a context of shared mutuality and interdependence." Ordination is integrally related to brokenness and community, not separated from it, in authentic ministry.⁵¹ A clergyperson is tempted like anyone else, unlike our Lord, with sin, easily confusing human and divine efforts. Every follower of Christ is dedicated to ministry according to giftedness, responsible to serve effectively. Ordination recognizes differences in the degree of responsibility for those that are serving and leading the body vocationally. This includes greater preparation, accountability, and ceremony, traditionally including the laying on of hands. Ministers do not differ in who they are, but in what they do. Within the ministry to which all are called, some are set apart to a more particular ministry that

⁴⁹ *Ordination: A Biblical Historical View* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), various.

⁵⁰ Walter Liefeld, review of *Ordination: A Biblical-Historical View* by Marjorie Warkentin. *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*. 27 (Sept. 1984): 365-8.

⁵¹ Fenhagen, *Ministry for a New Time*, 54; cf. Willimon, *Character and Calling*, 10 & *Pastor*, 29.

involves all of the others. They prepare and are examined for a lifetime of shepherding the whole. Like a shepherd with sheep, it includes both caring and management. This involves equipping, leading, and sometimes representing the others. The goal is to spend a lifetime helping others to fulfill their Divine callings.⁵² The amount of responsibility determines the way a person is set apart. For some, this includes public action and, for still others, the laying on of hands. Anointing empowers, but does not bring special grace unobtainable to others.⁵³

Ordination organizes the church and designates leadership. “The ideal minister is three things at least. He is a prophet, and he is a pastor, but he is just as much a priest. What he is not is a king.”⁵⁴ However, the servant leader, like the church at large, represents the King, his authority, and his order. The church is called to live out the life of Christ in the world, with leadership flowing out of that calling. The minister represents Christ to the church and, in some ways, on its behalf, to the world. Pastoral leaders serve Christ best by enabling God’s people to better present Him together. The ordained does not have a greater responsibility than the entire church to spread the gospel. The minister leads in this area by modeling, as he or she does in others areas, sometimes equipping others with greater gifts.⁵⁵

Ordained leaders guide in the challenging intersection of life in two kingdoms, one temporary, the other, eternal. Christ taught submission to the former except when it goes beyond Divine authority (Mark 12:17). Ordination is practiced, in part, because of Internal Revenue requirements to identify licensed clergy. Government recognition may be from vestiges of warmer church-state relations and/or separation. However, it is consistent with government requirements to identify leaders of other professions. As noted in a following chapter, the Assemblies of God portrays IRS-satisfying duties as its one absolute clerical distinction. Without apology, fulfilling legalities and wise stewardship are part of living in the world, though not of it (John

⁵² Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, 26; Willimon, *Character and Calling*, 10, 32 & Willimon, *Pastor*, 8-9, 18-19.

⁵³ Torbet in Fletcher, *Understanding the Pastoral Call*, fn.48, 49; 29. Sacramentalists, especially high church, disagree with this perspective – S. Harding telephone interview.

⁵⁴ P.T. Forsyth in Willimon, *Pastor*, 35.

⁵⁵ Willimon, *Pastor*, 33; Wainwright, “Some Theological Aspects,” 138.

17:16). Motivation for ordination increases because of tax benefits, because of which, there must be care to avoid conflict of interest. To be legal, ordination must fulfill the following requirements, which have increased in recent years; they primarily involve public worship leadership or at least the potential for it (emphases by the author):

Ministers are individuals who are duly ordained, commissioned, or licensed by a religious body constituting a church or church denomination. They are given the authority to conduct religious worship, perform sacerdotal functions, and administer ordinances or sacraments according to the prescribed tenets and practices of that church or denomination.

If a church or denomination ordains some ministers and licenses or commissions others, anyone licensed or commissioned must be able to perform substantially all the religious functions of an ordained minister to be treated as a minister for social security purposes.⁵⁶

Humility precedes and informs church order. The ordained leader develops the giftedness of others as a servant, not as a general or CEO. Hypollitus' prayer implies creational organization, rooted in God's nature. An oppressive chain of command contradicts the identity of God's people as royal believer-priests. The varying members of the body are organized, but equal beneath the Head (Rom 12, 1 Cor 12). Ordination does not entitle one to automatic privilege, honor, or class. It is for the good of others, not oneself. Traditionally, pastors were called under shepherds, assistants to the chief shepherd. The high calling and responsibility of ministry is stewardship for another.⁵⁷ As my late seminary professor Dr. Richard Bodey taught, pastoral leaders should seek neither respect nor titles for themselves (Matt 23:7). Nevertheless, the church itself is responsible to honor those that lead well, especially in teaching and preaching (1 Tim 5:17). Though not sought by the candidate, local and area church leaders initiate appropriate ceremony to publicly set each one apart.

There is a sense in which Christ himself passes on leadership authority through ordination. People are involved, both historically and regionally, representing the

⁵⁶ Internal Revenue Service, *Social Security and Other Information for Members of the Clergy and Religious Workers*, Publication 517, <http://www.irs.gov/publications/p517/ar02.html#d0e1130> (accessed January 27, 2008).

⁵⁷ Wainwright, *Some Theological Aspects*, 130-131, 134; Alfred J. Fletcher, *Understanding the Pastoral Call through Ascertaining the Mission of the Local Church* (DMin diss., Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 1997), 37; fn. 48, 49.

wider church. However, they do not create, but affirm the call and presence of Christ.⁵⁸ Christ Himself empowers the minister via the focused prayers of the entire church. He moves through the ceremony, assembly and the blessing of wider leadership. Overly mystifying what happens gives into “reductionistic” medieval tendencies, bordering on superstition. Reading Old Testament prophet-like anointing into the present ignores new covenant empowerment of believers (Joel 2:28). Since Pentecost, everyone, not only prophets, receives the Holy Spirit. Ordinands, like others, must seek the fullness of the Spirit as they begin to serve.⁵⁹

Ordination is an act of the entire church, not an individual or a single congregation. It is from above and below, given by God, but birthed in the local and universal church. Ambrose said it is “...not an absolute right that just anyone can claim.”⁶⁰ Like baptism, it is a church-wide function which guards the apostolic tradition, which assures continuity. It is preceded by examination, so that there is no hasty laying on of hands (1 Tim 5:22). Ordination is a check on human depravity by affirming the calling from below of those who have heard from above. For some, it can be an instrument which points to or enables them to hear the call of God. For others, it corrects and redirects others’ mistaken voices, within or without, for a call from God; it affords a time of gentle redirecting. It publicly authorizes and empowers the candidate to preach, conduct the ordinances or sacraments, and lead. The ritual of ordination, like the ordinances, also has to do with its permanence and connection to the body as a whole. It goes beyond temporary, local church giftedness and service. It is meant to last a lifetime and affects the entire body, local and universal.⁶¹

Protestants acknowledge past and present stewardship, although denying apostolic succession. They do this by involving representatives, including area pastors, of the wider church in the process. The approval and election of suitable candidates, the ordination itself and the ceremony are performed by the ordained (Acts 20:29).

⁵⁸ *Theological and Functional Dimensions of Ordination*, 9, 39; Willimon, *Pastor*, 35.

⁵⁹ Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, 30; Fletcher, *Understanding the Pastoral Call*, 59-61. Cf. Bradshaw, *Ordination Rites*, Vos and Wainwright, eds. 100 and Willimon, *Pastor*, 42.

⁶⁰ In Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, 23.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 27, 31; Wainwright, “Some Theological Aspects,” 136.

Leading the ceremony enhances clergy identity, bringing a sense of past continuity, wider stewardship, and responsibility by the church at large, sometimes represented across denominations.⁶² They express unity and continuity by asking a recognized senior leader, such as a bishop or older pastor, to pray the ordination prayer. This leader does not act alone, but as a representative of the body. Among Scotch Presbyterians, for instance, the Superintendent historically has no inherent power to ordain as an individual. He acts as a delegate of the General Assembly. The ceremony is generally done in the presence of the gathered congregation, which affirms God's call.⁶³

The Qualifications of Ordination

Ordination in the C&MA and other protestant groups traditionally requires young adulthood, though the age is now lengthening, especially for second career candidates. Many years of church experience demonstrate that Divine calling is needed to meet the challenge of ministry. It can be so difficult that people could not be paid to do it. This is shown by a study which finds clergy satisfaction to be unrelated to salary. Hope comes from God's authority, not relational skills. Helping people has no greater potential than social services, except when drawing from heaven itself.⁶⁴

Ordination also requires related gifts and abilities, including teaching and preaching; self-awareness and respect for others; good health; and mature character as affirmed by others. Other necessities include solid theology; denominational expertise and loyalty; strong spiritual life or personal piety; pastoral skill and training, including administration and people care; proven leadership, measured, as someone said, by answering the question, "Is anyone following this person?;" two years or so of

⁶² Porter, *The Ordination Prayers of the Ancient Churches*, xi, 78; Wainwright in *Ordination Rites*, Vos & Wainwright, eds., 137; Fletcher, *Understanding the Pastoral Call*, 48, 53, 60.

⁶³ Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, 31; Willimon, *Calling and Character*, 15-16; Bradshaw in *Ordination Rites*, Vos & Wainwright, eds., 99.

⁶⁴ Willimon, *Calling*, 22, 24, 25, 32.

fulltime ministry, often under a provisional license; and seminary education or the equivalent.⁶⁵

Preparation for Ordination

The church has always initiated ministry beyond the local congregation, a tradition the C&MA continues. Seminary literally means, “seed bed,” like plants in their formation stage.⁶⁶ Some, including the C&MA, accelerate licensing or ordination for students or graduates. Seminary can provide the basics of what is needed, but not full fruition; because of its academic setting, it is limited in its ability to work out theology practically, even when church leaders partner with academia. In fact, seminary can potentially destroy the piety of students, intellectualizing their faith. Seminary furthers academic excellence, but classroom theory is learned in practice.⁶⁷

Skill development is part of ordination preparation. Ordination does not necessarily bring higher knowledge, but integrity calls the ordained person to have a command of basic skills, like other professions. That is, as a lawyer must be skilled in the basics of law, so a clergyperson must be competent in ministry basics. He or she is not more important in essence than a skilled layperson, but a clergyperson is morally obligated to be skilled in ministry at least well as the best of laypeople. Further, whereas most clerics come from among the most skilled of laypeople, they must grow beyond where they were when they announced their ministry intentions. They are then ready to lead by example.

Character development is essential. Being and skills develop simultaneously, building on one another, and vice versa. Closely related to character is training in ministerial ethics, the moral leadership called for in the Pastoral Epistles.

Chrysostom suggests that neglecting this is like entrusting an expensive ship to an

⁶⁵ Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, 21-22; The Christian & Missionary Alliance, Uniform Policy on Ordination, *Manual of the C&MA*, updated 1/12/07, E4-2, <https://my.cmalliance.org/resources/books/manual/manual.jsp> (accessed August 30, 2007).; cf. Willimon, *Calling*, 51.

⁶⁶ Willimon, *Calling and Character*, 45

⁶⁷ Ian D. Bunting, “Practical Theology and Pastoral Training,” *Churchman* 93 (1979), 118, 120; Cyril S Rodd & Anthony Nevin Barnard, Anthony Nevin. “What Happens to the Ordinand,” *Theology* 72 (1969), 408-412, 551-553.

incompetent captain. Public and corporate responsibilities, including directing worship, assume that the pastor models what everyone is called to.⁶⁸

The ordination candidate studies ethics, including professional boundaries within and outside of the church, handling money, work ethics, and life balance. Some of these are similar to the helping professions, but others are unique to ministry. Some relate to ministerial life and identity: "...most of the ethical problems....are not due to our forgetting we are 'persons' but rather when we forget that we are pastors."⁶⁹

Because personal spiritual development is essential, it is widely believed that quality mentorship is crucial to preparation. It can guide through early ministry difficulties. A clergyperson, for instance, is more in danger of losing the reason for working than in overworking. The vocational minister risks over familiarity with the things of God, wherein the awe of His presence is lost. Another danger is the temptation to believe that ministry can be accomplished through skills alone. These hazards are best overcome through life-on-life development by well-matched, caring, ministry veterans, ideally in a cooperative learning environment.⁷⁰

The Ceremony of Ordination

Views of the significance of the ordination ceremony vary. The high church, which elevates the candidate to priesthood, sees it as one of the most impressive ceremonies in the church. The low church, including the C&MA, gathers as believer-priests to set apart one of its own for a lifetime of ministry. Both perspectives assure that that, the ceremony, like marriage, not be confused with the essence of ordination itself.⁷¹

As in society in general, some positions are informally appointed, some with ceremony. This does not demean one area, but emphasizes the degree of public responsibility. For example, a choir member is appointed with less ceremony than a

⁶⁸ Willimon, *Calling and Character*, 38, 40, 41, 47; Willimon, *Pastor*, 45; William K. McElvany, "Ministry, Measurements, and Madness: Toward a Theology of Ministry: Critique on a Unifying Image for Ordinands, Old and New and Yet-to-be," *Journal of Pastoral Care*, 30 (March 1976), 55-68; Wainwright, "Some Theological Aspects," 139.

⁶⁹ Willimon, *Calling and Character*, 11, 44, 151f. Cf. "National Capital Presbytery Code of Ethics" in Willimon, *Calling and Character*, 151f. (Appendix).

⁷⁰ Willimon, *Calling and Character*, 21, 45.

⁷¹ Ellard, *Ordination Anointings*, 14; Hiscox in Fletcher, *Understanding the Pastoral Call*, 52.

director is appointed with. A member of a governance authority is initiated with less fanfare than someone that begins a lifetime of vocational ministry.⁷²

The ceremony contains at least two outer elements: the ordination prayer and the laying on of hands. The inner element is what God does within the candidate. The prayer is usually brief, rooted in creation and relating to the words of Christ or of Paul. It is prayed as an act of and on behalf of the larger church, usually by a bishop, District Superintendent, or, among independents, a veteran pastor.⁷³

Ordination has been so identified with the laying on of hands that, at points, they are described nearly synonymously. Used for other purposes, it is referred to in I Timothy 4:14 and 2 Timothy 1:6, and possibly, indirectly, in Acts 6:6 and 13:3. However, neither its historical roots nor its Scriptural meaning are clear. It is practiced in Anglican Churches and some Calvinist churches, but not by Scottish churches. Calvin resisted laying on hands because he thought it encouraged superstition. Those who followed him believed it was optional.⁷⁴

When combined with the prayer for the Holy Spirit by wider leadership, the laying on of hands is the primary symbol of ordination. It points to the hope that is beyond the candidate, to a picture of becoming more than what one would be alone, showing that it is not only a local decision. Laying on of hands portrays the reality of both the empowerment of the Holy Spirit and its ties to human needs and abilities. Some, including those in the C&MA, believe that, as for Timothy, God sometimes empowers through the laying on of hands.⁷⁵

At the ordination ceremony, some assume clerical vestments, originally professional clothing which became identified with clergy itself. Ironically, this again became true

⁷² Samson, *Doctrine of Ordination*, 12.

⁷³ Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, 27; E. Kilmartin in *Ordination Rites*, Vos and Wainwright, eds., 42. Cf. *Theological and Functional Dimensions*, 49.

⁷⁴ E. Kilmartin, Bradshaw & L. Hoffman in *Ordination Rites*, 13, 42, 44, 104-106.

⁷⁵ Willimon, *Pastor*, 28, 32; idem, *Character and Calling*, 36-37; *C&MA manual*, E4-1.

in recent years with the business suit, identified with clergy. Some also anoint with oil like long ago.⁷⁶

Protestants involve the family in the ceremony, reflecting training and mentoring in ministerial family life. While not hiring the married pastor's family, the carrying out of the pastoral calling involves the home, which supports the pastoral calling.⁷⁷

The Length of Ordination

Traditionally, ordination, like baptism or marriage, is for life. The calling from above, which the candidate has subjectively experienced, is confirmed or denied by the community from below. This puts great responsibility on local congregations and licensing bodies, like the C&MA Licensing, Ordination, and Consecration Council (LO&CC), to speak with grace and truth.

A minority believe that ordination can be set aside, but never lightly. This is rare and complicated, and calls for great wisdom from the local and wider community. If a person later doubts his call completely, "he must be ready to doubt the motive or the judgment of everyone who has moved to vote for him and pass him on...we must beware of making Providence helpless."⁷⁸ Most expect adjustment and refocusing within ordination. For instance, a pastor may become a chaplain or teacher, or vice versa. A broad view of vocation that does not limit one to a particular model recognizes God's creativity and image in humanity. This can help an individual refocus in midlife and retirement. Both church and licensing body shepherd those with mid-life or retirement refocusing issues.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Porter, *The Ordination Prayers*, 79.

⁷⁷ Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, 32.

⁷⁸ Stacey, "Concerning the Ministry: Three Addresses to Ordinands, *Expository Times* (May 1964), 245.

⁷⁹ Edward Bratcher, *The Walk-On-Water Syndrome: Dealing with Professional Hazards in the Ministry* (Waco, Texas: Word, 1984), 79-82; Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, 29.

Some denominations treat ordination as installation to a particular church. Among some of these, relocation means re-ordination. This is eliminated by common regional and national recognition, sometimes through a voluntary regional body.⁸⁰

Categories of Ordination

Historically, the church has ordained as deacon, priest, and bishop. Others combine the terms, bishop, elder, and pastor in the same office.⁸¹ Ordination in the C&MA means a degree of authority, but not with a great deal of hierarchy. The C&MA believes that all pastors are elders, but not all elders are pastors. As one of the elders, senior pastors chair church governance authorities. Varying categories of ordination supports this position, which differentiates between staff members. The C&MA must decide whether varying categories can support minimal hierarchy while affirming differences of servant hood.

Since New Testament times, the church has set leaders apart for vocational ministry. This continues the biblical practice of existing leaders ordaining emerging leaders for public service on behalf of and for God's people. As Constantine brought church and state together, clergy initiation rites grew more sophisticated. The Middle Ages introduced Old Testament syncretism to clergy who were increasingly separated, even ontologically, from laity. Luther reacted against this, retaining ordination, but within and in tension with the priesthood of believers. Today's ordination continues the story of the church throughout the centuries. The church has much in common as it initiates its servants. All denominations struggle with the tensions between empowering laity and clergy, developing servant leaders who equip the entire church, and adjusting to church and cultural changes. A comparison of denominations will clarify the issues and opportunities before the C&MA.

⁸⁰ Wainwright, "Some Theological Aspects" 143-44; Fletcher, *Understanding the Pastoral Call*, 64, 66, 108; Telephone Interview with Ken Campbell, Faith Community Church (Baptist General Conference), Edgerton, MA, 9-18-05.

⁸¹ Gerald Ellard, *Ordination Anointings in the Western Church Before 1000 A.D.* (1933; repr., New York: Kreaus Reprint Co: New York, 1970), 3; cf. George E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974) 352, 532-533.

CHAPTER 3

ORDINATION AND COMPARATIVE STORIES

The account of ordination began as existing leaders among God's people set new leaders apart for vocational ministry in the Scriptures and throughout church history. This continued as new groups were formed by free association in North America for spiritual growth and Christian proclamation. Albert Benjamin (A.B.) Simpson began the Christian and Missionary Alliance in 1887 as an interdenominational society, including free, mainline, and holiness adherents, later assuming the structure of a denomination. A sampling of American protestant denominations will compare its ordination with others. They will be considered in the order from centralized to decentralized orientation, ranging from high church to low church. They will proceed from monarchical to congregational forms of church government, with the C&MA midway among them.

Episcopalian

The Episcopal Church understands clergy as a subset of the baptized, including laity, priests, deacons and bishops. This is a very intentional concept, based on a major study which concluded that the whole people (laos) of God together represent Christ in his worldwide mission. This is a radical change from the past, inclined to see ministry as performed by clergy. Within this context, it seeks to resolve the tension between lay and clerical ministry, heightened in a democratic society. It changes the nature of church authority, flattening out traditional hierarchy. It also improves how people of all callings work together to represent Christ in the world.⁸² The relationship of laity, priests, deacons and bishops moves from that of a pyramid to that of four parties in a circle sitting around a table.⁸³ Clergy enable the baptized to

⁸²Episcopal Church, "Exploring Ministry,"

http://www.episcopalchurch.org/1521_31579_ENG_HTM.htm?menupage=31578 (accessed Sept. 9, 2007); Episcopal Church, "Toward a Theology of Ministry," The Standing Commission on Ministry Development (SCMD), pursuant to Resolution A086 (1997 General Convention), http://www.episcopalchurch.org/mdl_55400_ENG_HTM.htm (accessed September 9, 2007).

⁸³Stewart C. Zabriskie, "Baptismal Ministry," *Sewanee Theological Review* 43:2 (Easter 2000), 193 as quoted in *Toward a Theology of Ministry* (accessed Sept. 14, 2007).

realize their full identity. This happens through pastoral leadership, service, and example. This is similar to the servant leadership of other baptized members to other institutions.⁸⁴

Episcopalians license for lay professional ministry. This includes worship, youth, Christian education, and music leadership. Each of these has professional associations, such as The National Network of Lay Professionals (NNLP). This association defines lay professionals as:

People employed in the mission and ministry of the Episcopal church who: regard their work as vocation, as their response to God's call in their lives; have acquired appropriate preparation and training for their work; are committed to continuing their education to improve skills and enhance performance; and who hold themselves accountable to the particular institutional structure within which they work, and to the wider community of the faithful, all for the love of Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit to the greater glory of God.⁸⁵

Episcopalians believe that some are called from within the people of God to particularly care for the church and its mission as bishops, priests or presbyters and deacons. The tension between the mission of the body and the sacrament of special orders is a necessary counter-balancing mystery, like that of the trinity.⁸⁶

Deacons are ordained to serve by example and leadership, appointed by the bishop. They serve and mobilize the church with ministries of justice, peace and mercy to the needy. Priests or presbyters, while representing both the high priesthood of Christ and the priesthood of believers, stand at the edge of heaven and earth. They are a priesthood within the priesthood. They represent Christ and his priesthood in sacrament, word, and pastoral care. They also traditionally represent the bishop. Bishops serve as pastors for a given area, especially to the ordained. They traditionally protect the faith, unity and order of the church, symbolically presiding at the eucharist and ordinations, representing the church. Nevertheless, like deacons and priests, they serve as members of the community of faith.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Episcopal Church, *Toward a Theology*.

⁸⁵ Episcopal Church, *Exploring Ministry*.

⁸⁶ Episcopal Church, *Toward a Theology*.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

Calling to vocational ministry is determined, where most fully known, by the believing community, including congregation, school chaplains, bishop's staff, and close friends. Each diocese tailors common procedure based on canon law according to regional needs. The bishop and Commission on Ministry guide decisions for individual preparation.⁸⁸

Most Episcopalian requirements for ordination are generally addressed through successfully completing a seminary Masters of Divinity (M.Div.) degree. Prior to this, one must be accepted as a postulant, after which the seminary of the bishop's recommendation is attended. During seminary there is field-based church placement, and a summer of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). Readiness for ordination is monitored by a Commission on Ministry Committee (approval needed by mid-second year), with final affirmation by the standing committee of the diocese which, like the former, is advisory to the bishop. In some dioceses, there are mentor groups which are not prescribed, but of help to new priests.⁸⁹

Traditionally more of a lay movement, the Alliance differs with the Episcopal Church, but struggles with similar issues. Among the C&MA's early adherents were Episcopalians;⁹⁰ however, C&MA ministry education reacted to the barriers of usual clergy seminary requirements. This later resulted in high C&MA post-appointment requirements, rather than seminary. The C&MA does not usually oversee ministerial preparation until the completion of education. After appointment to ministry, C&MA licensing bodies hold candidates accountable as Episcopalians do during higher education. This is because the C&MA continues its practice of drawing from a wide variety of traditional and non-traditional backgrounds. The Episcopal Church and the C&MA grapple with opposite ends of the clergy-laity divide. Episcopalians seek to lower hierarchy by placing it within the priesthood of the entire body of Christ. The Alliance requires ministers to ascribe to constituted authority to unify its efforts.

⁸⁸ Episcopal Church, *Exploring Ministry*.

⁸⁹ Telephone Interview with S. Harding, Church of the Messiah, Glens Falls, N.Y., 12-2-05.

⁹⁰ Paul L. King, "Catch the Vision: Renewing the Call to a Deeper Life," *Alliance Life*, February 2007, <http://www.alliancelife.org/article.php?id=105> (accessed 10-12-07).

The C&MA does not ordain deacons. However, the Alliance encourages involvement of laity in vocational ministry, especially among second career people. Clarifying this category aside from clergy and developing related associations may help strengthen support for those in staff positions that do not involve proclamation.

Because it is not based on a sacramental foundation, the Alliance views clergy as neither priestly nor as representative of, in a strict sense, of the District Superintendent. Less centralized and, not sacramental, the District Superintendent does not regularly visit congregations to preside at the Lord's Table. The District Superintendent does, however, oversee ordination as a function of the wider church, though not as one that brings a larger blessing.

Reformed/Presbyterian

Reformed or Presbyterian churches ordain both deacons and elders to life-time office, dismissible only by ecclesiastical legal action. Preparations are made, with some parallels to vocational ordination, which include theological and practical training, a trial period, and study for examination. This is because clergy are seen as teaching elders, who, along with ruling elders, oversee the church, with similar governing authority. A teaching elder, however, does have special responsibility for communicating the Scriptures and administering the sacraments. The teaching elder also chairs the Session, the governing body of the church as the C&MA pastor leads the governance authority.⁹¹

A vocational call to ministry among Presbyterians is seen as inward by God's Spirit, outward as evidenced to the congregation, and affirmed by ecclesiastical court. Ordination is defined as "the authoritative admission of one duly called to an office in the Church of God, accompanied with prayer and the laying on of hands, to which it is proper to add the giving of the right hand of fellowship."⁹²

⁹¹ Presbyterian Church in America, "The Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church in America," 6th ed. (June 2007) 8-4 to 8-5, 12-1, 24-1 to 24-7. www.pcaac.org/BCO%202007%20Combined%20for%20Web.pdf (accessed Sept. 28, 2007)

⁹² Ibid., 16-1, 17-1.

A candidate submits to the care of the area Presbytery, made up of area teaching and ruling elders, for ministry preparation. This group licenses and ordains to the ministry. Candidates must be local church members, with strong ministry and character references. The Presbytery guides the candidate personally, practically, and academically, assuring the study of prescribed subjects. This includes public worship leading, preaching and service. The candidate must report annually to the Presbytery, which partners with his instructors for his development.⁹³

Presbytery oversight continues as the candidate completes graduate education. During seminary, students may be licensed to preach after one year of study. One summer and one year long internship are required by graduation. Afterwards, a candidate is assigned to a church, and called before a classis (the same as a presbytery) for an ordination examination. Mentoring occurs for five years after ordination and varies in intensity, but follows written guidelines.⁹⁴

A session (board) may be required to submit a written recommendation of a candidate for licensure to the Presbytery, which answers questions about character, spiritual life, and leadership. After this, the presbytery takes the candidate under its care, guiding in development and requiring regular reports. Immediate oversight and communication is provided by the local session. Mentoring is done by a pastor, who includes the candidate to assist in pastoral duties. The candidate is also given opportunity to preach and teach in the respective church.⁹⁵

Upon acceptance of a call, an intern is ordained as soon as possible. Usual prerequisites include bachelors and masters degrees from approved institutions. The Presbytery, assuming but not repeating licensing questions, examines him further in experience, doctrine, church history, and denomination. This includes a thesis as assigned by the Presbytery, skill in original languages (sometimes handled by a

⁹³ Presbyterian Church in America, The Book of Church Order, 18-1 to 18-6; Email from Carolyn Nystrom, Immanuel Presbyterian Church (Evangelical Presbyterian Church) Elder, Warrenville, Illinois, 10-15-2005.

⁹⁴ Telephone Interview with Stan Vander Klay, Christian Reformed Church (NE) Convener of Classis, 11-21-05.

⁹⁵ Orthodox Presbyterian Church, "A Suggested Guide for Taking Men Under Care of Presbytery." 11-30-99. www.opc.org/cce/undercare.html (accessed October 15, 2005); Email from Paul Ferrie, former PCA and OPC pastor, 10-15-05.

seminary), and the preaching of a sermon. The candidate is then ordained, ideally in the church where serving, then appointed by the presbytery to a particular church. Vows are taken by both the candidate and the congregation. The presbytery then lays hands on the candidate, setting him or her apart for ministry.⁹⁶

Regular preachers must be licensed every four years by the Presbytery, which examines orally as to preaching, Christian experience, calling, theology, Scripture, and denomination. An internship, which may occur during education, requires a similar examination, which may be conducted concurrently. Re-examination is required upon changing jurisdictions. Some also submit to a vow of ethics. This is similar to that of some Baptists, but, like many reformed approaches, more extensive.⁹⁷

Some reformed churches have three local church ministerial categories, pastor, associate pastor and assistant pastor. A pastor and associate pastor are congregationally elected, with session membership. An assistant pastor is elected by a session and is not a session member.⁹⁸

Ordaining lay elders and deacons contrasts with the C&MA, which only ordains clergy. Alliance churches set apart elders and deacons, but for limited terms of service, and without formal theological examination. Many C&MA churches have limited tenure for elders and deacons in order to maintain leadership vitality. While serving in a District office, I once had to clarify to a church that the C&MA does not practice perpetual eldership. He has also experienced higher expectations for theological precision of elders among those with reformed background.

The Alliance, like the reformed, ordains for life, but requires a particular position for an active license. Continued ordination is assumed, and only revoked in extreme

⁹⁶ Presbyterian Church in America, *The Book of Church Order*, 21-1 to 21-7.

⁹⁷ Office of the Stated Clerk, 9-1 to 19-13; National Capital Presbytery, "National Capital Presbytery Code of Ethics for Clergy & Other Church Professionals," approved Jan. 24, 1995, www.thepresbytery.org/Documents/COMPoliciesProcedures/CodeofEthics/tabid/16413/Default.aspx (accessed Sept. 8, 2007). As found in Willimon, *Calling & Character*, 151-164.

⁹⁸ Presbyterian Church in America, *The Book of Church Order*, 22-1.

circumstances. However, a C&MA pastor is not licensed after one year without a church and, practically speaking, loses touch with the denomination.

In practice, the C&MA has some similarities to the three categories of senior, associate and assistant pastor, but leaves greater flexibility to the local church. C&MA senior pastors and staff members must all be approved by the District Superintendent. C&MA pastors are elected by the governance authority, sometimes with a “straw” vote of the congregation. Associate and assistant pastors are usually elected by C&MA church boards upon recommendation of the senior pastor. Associate pastors tend to have greater status than Assistant Pastors, but this depends on the particular church. Formally distinguishing between senior and staff positions can clarify C&MA ordination.

The C&MA does not have a voluntary code of ethics like many reformed groups. It must add a voluntary code to its uniform policy, though, like mainline baptists, in an abbreviated form.⁹⁹ This will improve the ethics of pastors, including their movement between churches and ministries. One of the items that such standards address is the boundaries of pastors and former congregations. I encountered more than one pastor who transgressed these boundaries. This may be because of the combination of the lack of a common pastoral education program and the lack of a voluntary ecclesiastical ethical standard.

Wesleyan

Wesleyan youth that feel called into ministry, a major emphasis of this tradition, can register with The Fellowship of the Called. Wesleyans who enroll in a college ministerial training major are expected to register and meet annually with a District Board of Ministerial Development. Generally trained in denominational colleges, they are licensed upon graduation, and/or after optional seminary training. Alternatives are available for those entering at twenty-eight years of age or older, or transferring other denominations. Upon graduation, candidates must successfully answer questions, but they are not given a formal examination. If necessary, they

⁹⁹ Cf. Appendix C.

may be asked to return one year later. They are ordained after two years of mentorship by a senior pastor. The denomination publishes training material for the Board of Ministerial Development and for mentors.¹⁰⁰

Wesleyan ministry is divided into two broad categories, Vocational Ministry and Lay Ministry. Vocational ministry includes Ordained Ministry, which authorizes preaching, conducting of baptism, sacraments and weddings, and participation in district ministry. An Ordained Ministry license may be transferred to other districts. A second subcategory of Vocational Ministry is Commissioned Ministry is meant to be rare. Commissioned Ministry is restricted to those who enter ministerial studies, are already licensed and are at least forty years of age.

The second area of credentialing is Lay Minister, which includes Special Workers. Examples of this are Christian Educators, youth and music directors, and lay missionaries and counselors. Lay Ministers serve under pastoral or district oversight. Another subcategory of Lay Minister is Lay Ministry, usually related to preaching that is restricted to a particular church.¹⁰¹

The C&MA program, *Called to Serve*, which tracks candidates, is similar to the Wesleyan *Fellowship of the Called*. However, without assumed denominational schooling, C&MA candidacy has more thorough screening. The two broad Wesleyan vocational categories limit ordination to preaching pastors. Like Assemblies, Episcopalians, and Evangelical Free Churches, this lessens the challenge the Alliance has with ordaining multiple staff members.

Lay (professional) Ministry, which includes staff positions, includes the limiting designation, not found in the C&MA, of serving under pastoral or district oversight. It includes those whose ministry may be limited to a particular church. Highlighting the pastoral supervision relationship can improve Alliance credentialing, especially in distinguishing staff and senior positions. In addition, the Wesleyan subcategory of

¹⁰⁰ Wayne Richards, "Ministerial Preparation Information Packet" (2004 ed.). The Wesleyan Church, 2, 7, www.wesleyan.org (accessed November 2005); Telephone Interview with Angela Scudder, Administrative Assistant to the DS, Wesleyan Church (New England/E. NY). 11-22-05.

¹⁰¹ Richards, Ministerial Preparation Information Packet, 5.

vocational Commissioned Ministry for second career ministers has no parallel in the C&MA. It deals with the rise of second career clergy, a phenomenon which has also been recognized with a new category by the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. The Alliance must address this trend in its licensing procedures.

Assemblies of God

The Assemblies of God defines ordination as follows:

The public ceremony by which the Movement acknowledges the divine call, commission, and qualification of a person to ministry in the Assemblies of God; extends its blessings, fellowship, and opportunities; receives his pledge of dedication, faithfulness, and loyalty; and invokes divine enablement for success in life and ministry.¹⁰²

Ordination is administered through the denominational structure, from the candidate's pastor to district officials, including an examining committee and an ordaining presbytery, which recommends candidates to national officers. While publicly recognizing divine calling, ordination is not required. Christian equality before God empowers laity to perform every necessary function, except where legally restricted.¹⁰³

Empowerment and authority come directly from Christ by his Spirit, not through expendable human instruments, who are, in no fashion, part of apostolic succession. Nevertheless, as a wider church concern and following apostolic example, the superintendent, with area presbyters and senior ministers, lays hands and prays over candidates, who are, in turn, recognized by the national gathering. The ceremony's spiritual nature is more important than its ritual. Though not sacramental, it can be a spiritual highlight, deepening commitment, grace and empowerment. Ordination is restricted to those involved in the pastoral, proclamation ministry of Ephesians 4:11 (apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor-teachers). Others, like directors of

¹⁰² Assemblies of God, "Assemblies of God View of Ordination," 2007, http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/Position_Papers/pp_0821_ordination.cfm (accessed August 29, 2007).

¹⁰³ Ibid.

Christian education, youth or music are licensed or given Christian Workers Certificates.¹⁰⁴

The process of ordination begins with an application for initial district credentials, completed with sectional presbyter recommendation and regional committee examination. The candidate, who must be at least twenty-three years old, must serve satisfactorily for at least two years. After this he or she is re-examined by the sectional committee and then by a district council ordination committee. Upon success, General Council presents an ordination certificate, which is renewed annually upon completion of a questionnaire.¹⁰⁵

Credentials committees prepare candidates for ordination. They provide copies of the General Council position paper, which calls for genuine experience, personal maturity, divine calling, proper theology, practical preparation and abilities, and denominational loyalty. With spiritual sensitivity, the candidate completes an in-depth questionnaire and a ministry and doctrinal statement for personal development, pastoral or professional counseling indicators, and committee evaluation. Training is obtained through denominational schooling, usually at Assemblies of God schools, although training through extension, correspondence, and other programs is available. After graduation, licensing is obtained upon church appointment. After two years of successful service and attendance at two denominational events, the candidate is ordained.¹⁰⁶

The Assemblies of God shares roots with the Alliance,¹⁰⁷ with similar ordination perspectives. However, it relates candidates to the denomination more deliberately, ordaining as more of a national function. The Assemblies also gives lay and ordained ministry more of an equal standing than the C&MA, framing the uniqueness of ordination as a legal matter. Like the C&MA, ordination is Christ-centered, but emphasized especially by contrasting its perspective with apostolic succession. Both

¹⁰⁴ Assemblies of God, Assemblies of God View of Ordination.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Telephone Interview with Harold Hilde, Secretary/Treasurer, Assemblies of God, Southern NE District, 11-05.

¹⁰⁷ Gary B. McGee, "All for Jesus: The Revival Legacy of A.B. Simpson," *Enrichment Journal*, Spring 1999 http://www.ag.org/enrichmentjournal/199902/082_all_for_jesus.cfm (accessed Oct. 12, 2007).

groups see the ceremony as more important spiritually than traditionally. Neither group is sacramental, but both see ordination as a time when God may freshly empower. The process of ordination is similar to the C&MA, except for the annual completion of a questionnaire for continuation. The Alliance does not require denominational schooling, except for missionary candidates, who must have at least one year in a denominational school. Attendance at C&MA denominational events is a requirement of licensing and so, assumed, though not stated, for ordination. In the C&MA, candidates are also prepared by a licensing committee. However, the Alliance requires multiple position papers and the readings.

The Alliance challenge arises from, unlike Assemblies, ordaining beyond proclamation. Fulltime C&MA staff members are compelled to pursue the same ordination requirements as preaching pastors. This reduces institutional barriers between staff members. However, it increases the workload of candidates and of denominational leaders.

Evangelical Free Church of America

The Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) credentials to affirm Divine calling to ministry, to affirm denominational affiliation and ministry, and to fulfill legal requirements. Some are vocationally called to, gifted by, and appointed by God to equip the rest of the body, made up of variously gifted believers to serve (Eph. 5). The Church affirms this by the laying on of hands.¹⁰⁸

Credentialing requires denominational church membership, denominational doctrinal agreement (renewed every five years) and cooperation, fulltime¹⁰⁹ status, denominational cooperation, completion of the Free Church history, doctrine and polity course, EFCA divorce policy clearing and completion of any sub-category requirements.¹¹⁰ In addition, the Evangelical Free Church (EFCA), licenses until ordination for three years, subject to annual renewal. If the licensing interview or

¹⁰⁸ The Evangelical Free Church of America, "Steps Toward Credentialing," Jan. 2000, 1-2. http://www.forestlakes-efca.org/downloads/Steps_Toward_Credentialing_-_booklet.pdf (accessed September 22, 2007).

¹⁰⁹ 30 hours per week or more.

¹¹⁰ Evangelical Free Church of America, Steps Toward Credentialing, 2-4.

paper are deficient, the candidate must work on the area of difficulty. The primary focus of ordination is doctrinal.¹¹¹

The Free Church has four types of credentials. First is pastoral ordination. This is for males who have completed a Masters of Divinity or its equivalent in an evangelical seminary, with some exceptions for knowledge and experience. They must complete ministerial licensing requirements, have a ministerial license for a minimum of three years, be approved by an examining council, and demonstrate giftedness for ministry to the Board on Ministerial Standing. When an ordained person leaves EFCA ministry in good standing, his ordination is placed in trust until he requests reinstatement.

The second category of EFCA credentials is a Certificate of Christian Ministry. This is for those in professional, non-pastoral, church ministries. Examples include staff pastors, ministers to specific age groups, institutional pastors, missionaries, and evangelists. Related college or seminary degrees are required, with for knowledge or experience equivalency exceptions made by the Board of Ministerial standing. Like the ordained, candidates must complete ministerial license requirements, serve with a license for at least three years, be approved by an examining council, and exhibit related giftedness to the Board of Ministerial Standing.

A third type of credential is a Ministry License. This is for those who are preparing for either of the first two categories. It is valid for up to three years at time. After this, it is renewable annually for up to two years.

A fourth and final credential is a Recommendation for Ministry. This is limited to males who perform ministry as lay people or students, although it is not intended for internships. It is valid for three years, with annual renewal, without permanency.¹¹²

Application for credentials is made to the appropriate District Superintendent, including a letter giving the reasons for application and letters of church and school

¹¹¹ John Kaiser, e-mail message to the author, October 15, 2005.

¹¹² Evangelical Free Church of America, Steps Toward Credentialing, 4-8.

recommendation. The District Superintendent initiates an examination of the candidate by a permanent or special council made up of five pastors and five laymen from five Evangelical Free churches, with no more than three members of the candidate's home congregation. For other credentials, the home district determines the council composition. The candidate presents a written document describing his conversion, calling, polity, lifestyle, theology, polity and practical viewpoints to the council. Sometimes called an ordination thesis, it may be as long as fifty pages long. The council may recommend ordination to the national Board of Ministerial Standing upon a three-fourths vote. A first-time ordination requires a public ceremony but is not required for others. It includes laying on of hands by district and church leaders and presentation of credentials.¹¹³

The EFCA and the C&MA make fulltime ministry status a usual requirement for credentials. The Evangelical Free Church requires a year longer of successful licensed ministry than the C&MA does. The doctrinal focus of preparation in the EFCA is comparable to the C&MA, with both requiring doctrine and polity courses. However, the C&MA requires multiple position papers and reading assignments, versus the one longer paper required by the EFCA. The singular paper may be due to the EFCA assumption of a Masters of Divinity degree from its own seminary. The C&MA can simplify the ordination process by combining required papers into a thesis-length document.

The inclusion of lay members on the ordination council, like Baptists, differs from the C&MA, which values more centralization. When an ordained person is unassigned, the C&MA, while not removing ordination, generally suspends a license after one year. The Free Church placement of ordination in trust deepens its sense of permanence.

The EFCA Ministry License is comparable to the C&MA Official Worker license which is presented to candidates preparing for ordination. Its Recommendation for

¹¹³ Evangelical Free Church of America, Steps Toward Credentialing, 9-10; An example of a thesis-length paper is "Ordination Paper of Michael E. Evans: Evangelical Free Church of America," March 18, 2002 <http://www.crossroadefc.org/images/ordinationpaper.pdf> (accessed October 20, 2007).

Ministry is similar to the C&MA Lay Minister License. Free Church ordination, like the Assemblies of God, is limited to pastoral, seemingly proclamation-oriented, ministry. It is also the only position that requires setting apart in a public ceremony. Limiting ordination to senior pastors is more restricted than the C&MA, which ordains some in staff positions. While decreasing candidate and denomination preparatory responsibility, it limits some recognition as desired by the Alliance.

Baptist

Ordination is a local church function among Baptists. This may even include the decision of whether or not to require ordination. There are thus differences between denominations, regional offices, and individual churches, especially between mainline and independents. As such, procedures are recommendations, not requirements.¹¹⁴

After consideration by pastor and deacons of calling and qualifications, Baptist churches may license candidates to preach. This is a preliminary step to ministry, serving as a recommendation of a calling to preach. Baptist candidates, licensed by the local church, may be under the care of the local pastor. There may be no prescribed study program in preparation for one's oral exam. For some, this may lead automatically to ordination.¹¹⁵

After local church installation, the pastor appears before a regional review board. Under a watch-care system with mentoring for one year, the candidate prepares a paper which describes his or her call to ministry, personal theology and service experience. This paper is presented at a hearing, with follow-up questions, led by area church representatives. Local clergy then vote concerning the candidates' ordination.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Southern Baptist Convention, "Frequently Asked Questions," <http://www.sbc.net/aboutus/faqs.asp#2> (accessed August 31, 2007); Baptist General Conference, "Ordination of Ministers," posted 9/14/04, "<http://www.bgcworld.org/psevice/ordin.htm> (accessed August 31, 2007); American Baptist Churches USA, "Ordination Standards by Region," http://www.abc-usa.org/Resources/Ordination_Std.htm (accessed August 31, 2007).

¹¹⁵ American Baptist Churches USA, Ordination Standards by Region.

¹¹⁶ Telephone Interview with David Larson, Voluntown (CT) Baptist (ABC) Church, 12-01-05.

For some Baptists, there are prerequisite seminary and history/polity courses. Mainline Baptists have more formal routes to ordination, with the usual route being college, then seminary. There may be experiential equivalence and/or lay ministerial training granting credit toward ordination.¹¹⁷

Baptists recognize the need for wisdom, especially for ordaining candidates without Baptist heritage. Joint recognition of the candidate is provided through a visiting ordination council, which examines one's spiritual life, including conversion and call to ministry; college or seminary education; Baptist history, doctrines, polity and commitments; and practical experience, such as a year or two of fulltime ministry. Candidates may agree to a vow of ministerial ethics, including ethics of personhood, calling, congregation, colleagues and denomination.¹¹⁸

The ordination council is called by the candidate's church, usually the congregation where the individual is serving. The council calls area pastors and, in some cases, lay leaders to be part of the ordaining council. The outcome is a recommendation to the local church for ordination or, occasionally, further preparation. The candidate may provide multiple copies to area pastors of a doctrinal statement and a statement of calling. First, the calling church introduces the candidate, who then makes an opening statement and is questioned by area ministers, although questioning is technically open to any observer. Usually, the questioning, neither designed to prove him wrong nor to examine gray areas, tests consistency of thought. The vote is by plurality of the council, which may meet without the candidate. In extreme cases, ordination may be denied.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ American Baptist Churches USA, "Recommended Procedures for Ordination, Commissioning, and Recognition for the Christian Ministry in the American Baptist Churches," rev. May 1997, ed. Nov. 1997, http://www.abc-usa.org/Resources/Ordination_Std.pdf (accessed August 31, 2007), 7-10, 22.

¹¹⁸ American Baptist Churches USA, "The Covenant & Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches," amen. 10-04, <http://www.ministerscouncil.com/WhoWeAre/documents/CodeEngAmended2004.pdf> (accessed September 8, 2007). Baptist General Conference, "Ordination of Ministers," posted 9/14/04, <http://www.bgcworld.org/pservice/ordin.htm> (accessed August 31, 2007); idem., "Affirmation of Ministerial Ethics," <http://www.bgcworld.org/pservice/ethics.htm> (accessed August 31, 2007).

¹¹⁹ Baptist General Conference, "Ordination of Ministers;" Telephone Interview with K. Campbell, Faith Community Church (Baptist General Conference), Edgarton, MA, 9-18-05.

A public ceremony is sometimes held on the same date of the council, although a day or week's delay may be preferred to lessen pressures. The service is considered a church function, planned by the congregation with assistance as needed from area ministers. It includes Scripture reading, prayer, music, reading of the Council's recommendation, sermon by the ordained, charge to the church, ordination prayer, hand of fellowship, charge to the candidate, and benediction by the ordained. A congregational vote is precluded by prior decision to ordain on condition of council recommendation.¹²⁰

Baptist churches recognize the freedom that ordination gives to ministers in moving between churches without repeated ordination. Regional recognition may be requested in conjunction with local church ordination. However, there is opportunity to limit ordination to a particular congregation.¹²¹

After successfully completing an ordination examination, mainline Baptists may ordain, upon appointment, to four types of positions: parish ministry; mission service at home or abroad; specialized ministries which include preaching, teaching and/or pastoral ministry (e.g. chaplaincy, seminary professor, counseling); or denominational or wider church leadership. A Baptist church may revoke the ordination of a minister among its members after calling and receiving the recommendation of a similar council. This may be done for deviations in doctrine or lifestyle.¹²²

The local church orientation of Baptist ordination differs from the C&MA, whose uniform policy reflects more centralization. This explains why I conflicted with leaders of Baptist background who disagreed when a C&MA District refused to ordain a church member. The C&MA, especially with its wide diversity of training options, must add a voluntary ethical statement to its procedures. A C&MA Licensing, Ordaining and Consecration Council cannot limit ordination to a particular congregation because it works against a uniform policy. It also contrasts with the

¹²⁰ Baptist General Conference, Ordination of Ministers; Telephone Interview with K. Campbell.

¹²¹ American Baptist Churches USA, "FAQs About Ordained Ministry," <http://www.abc-usa.org/documents/OrdainedMinistryFAQ.pdf> (accessed August 31, 2007).

¹²² American Baptist Churches USA, "Recommended Procedures," 13; Baptist General Conference, "Ordination of Ministers."

outward movement of the C&MA, which aligns more with the Acts 1:8 concentric sending circles than a local orientation.

Simple categories, also similar to those of the Assemblies of God, must be considered by the C&MA, including the restriction of ordination to preaching, teaching and/or pastoral ministry. In essence this is practiced by the C&MA, but it must be clarified. The revocation of ordination is similar to the C&MA, although the Alliance does so by district authority and under very extreme circumstances.

The Alliance has much in common with the ordination procedures of other denominations. All of them set apart adults for ministry as an act of the wider church, affirming below what God has ordained above. Most require two years of mentored ministry, followed by an examination by the wider church. Senior leaders then initiate a public ceremony, which includes the laying on of hands. Many also require denominational schooling, sometimes with supervision during studies. Most also limit ordination to preaching pastors. The C&MA does not require denominational schooling, and ordains more broadly. This results in higher post-appointment requirements for every position, which makes up for the uniformity which a denominational school provides. However, when candidates are most motivated, the extraordinarily high requirements slow down the movement. This is especially true for candidates that are not senior pastors. A way must be found to speed up the process of ordination without losing the quality of C&MA candidacy. This can be done by adjusting ordination to fit a new ministry context.

We have compared C&MA ordination with the stories of five protestant denominations from high to low church. All practice this nearly universal leadership initiation rite which continues the biblical and historical accounts of affirming a call to vocational ministry to an individual among the believing community. This happens as senior leaders from the wider church examine candidates on behalf of the church. Upon confirmation, they then lead the church in a public service of ordaining

the candidate to ministry. They prayerfully prepare the candidate for a meaningful public ceremony. However, the C&MA is unusually rigorous in its post-appointment requirements, in effect a post-educational seminary, for ordination. This tradition has produced quality candidates but faces unique challenges in a changing environment. The C&MA has always adjusted for the sake of the mission. The size of the C&MA makes change difficult, like turning a large ocean liner in a harbor. This begs the difficult question, whether adjusting licensing procedures can be done well and with enough benefit for the movement, or whether credentialing must stay as it is. This can be determined by examining the ordination procedures of the C&MA.

CHAPTER 4

ORDINATION AND THE ALLIANCE STORY

The C&MA joins the biblical story, beginning with the setting apart of priests in the Old Testament (Exod 28-29, Lev 6-9) to that of the disciples (John 15:16), apostles (Acts 14:23), church leaders (Acts 14:23 & Titus 1:5), pastors and missionaries (1 Tim 1:6, 2 Tim 4:14). The C&MA dedicates people who have been given to the body for varied kinds of service (Eph 4:11-13). Ordination also includes the laying on of hands, a time when the Spirit may freshly impart gifts or empower. The C&MA joins the story of the church and the stories of other denominations by affirming a calling from above with a calling from below when demonstrated in life and ministry.¹²³

The Alliance is both enriched and challenged by the diversity of its candidates, whose non-traditional backgrounds are part of its ethos. Participants include graduates of C&MA and non-C&MA colleges and seminaries, Ministerial Study Program (lay education) graduates, and transfers from other denominations. A growing number of multi-staff candidates include second career and candidates that have developed within their own churches.

Recent Developments

In the last decade, the C&MA has sought to recover the qualities of a movement within the context of a denomination. This has brought new flexibility, especially beyond North America. This flexibility must be applied to North American credentialing. Missional ordination broadens mobilization, while self-preserving credentialing restricts growth. The former affirms laity, lowering clerical walls. The C&MA has enlarged ministry deployment by affirming lay ministry, valuing service above traditional certification in its earliest days. Nyack Missionary Training Institute (now College) was created with the intention of helping students bypass the

¹²³ The Christian & Missionary Alliance, Uniform Policy on Ordination, *Manual of the C&MA*, updated 1/12/07, E3-1, 4-1, <https://my.cmalliance.org/resources/books/manual/manual.jsp> (accessed August 30, 2007).

traditional seminary route to ministry. Boldly adjusting ordination to fit new kinds of candidates follows this tradition of spiritual elasticity.

The C&MA values both Spirit-enablement and knowledge or ministry skills. Spiritual formation, which begins with full surrender to God, underlies good skill and knowledge preparation. Wise stewardship then matches warm hearts with the best possible skill and knowledge attainable for each candidate. Non-traditional training routes are important to the C&MA. This was bolstered by reactions against higher education following the fundamentalist-modernist controversy. There was therefore no denominational seminary until the founding of The Jaffrey School of Missions in 1960. Traditional seminary programs were added with its renaming as The Alliance Theological Seminary (ATS) in 1979. ATS has produced a generation of C&MA leaders with denominational graduate education. This enriches candidacy, but does not change a broad candidate base. The C&MA ordains those of many backgrounds, including denominational and non-denominational schools and non-traditional education.

Decentralized education, even with ATS, is a growing trend with preparation becoming more geographical than denominational, reflecting both national trends and C&MA tradition. Regional Candidate Directors have been added to assist the National Candidate Director in tracking candidates. This has greatly increased the number of ministry candidates, but also the diversity of their backgrounds.

Ordination is for one's lifetime. For most, this means beginning in young adulthood with Bible college or seminary. The lifetime assumption, however, conflicts with a growing number of second career ministry candidates. Their numbers are increasing because of growing life expectancy and career flexibility, as well as national spiritual renewal, with some of them becoming Christians at midlife. The C&MA addresses this through its existing system, which, by definition, assumes lifelong service. It is of particular concern because of the C&MA tradition of welcoming non-traditional candidates for the sake of broadening the mission. C&MA International Ministries is

increasingly flexible for these very reasons. C&MA Church Ministries must adjust credentialing to fit the changing candidacy context.

The C&MA is becoming more ethnically diverse, with many first generation immigrants speaking in first languages other than English. This increases the variety of viewpoints, but also makes change difficult in the uniform policy of ordination.

In 1998, the C&MA heightened elder authority, largely in response to questions about women in ministry. This raised elders to the stated final governance authority whereby they are the highest servant leaders in a local church. C&MA governance is led by senior pastors or their designees. Ordination is thus related to elder authority and, so, to final church governance.

Definitions

The C&MA definition of ordination flows from its history of being a missionary church, together with its recent decision about elder authority. It reads as follows:

The Church's public recognition of the call from God, distinct from human vocational choice, to men for a lifetime ministry, through speech and exemplary lifestyle, of preaching and teaching the Word of God, protecting God's people from spiritual enemies and doctrinal heresies, overseeing and promoting the spiritual development of God's people, and equipping God's people to fulfill the Great Commission to "make disciples of all nations" for the purpose of knowing and glorifying God by obeying His will and building His Kingdom. The occasion for setting men apart for such ministry is the Church's affirmation of the candidate's faithful completion of preparation for ordination through approved education, in-service training, field experience with mentoring for a minimum of two years, and examination by a qualified council of peers.¹²⁴

Alliance ordination is a public event of the wider church, beyond the individual and local congregation. It is founded in the community of faith, which publicly declares and affirms the call of God. It is not private or done in secret, like giving or prayer.

It is not confined to leadership within a local church or the broader church.

Ordination a public act in which the church affirms and cooperates to set servants apart for ministry. The church, in turn, declares to the world its commitment to and support of its leaders. These leaders, on occasion, are called to represent the Church

¹²⁴ Christian & Missionary Alliance, Uniform Policy, E4-1.

in their cities and towns. This occurs when clergy pray at civic events and give spiritual leadership on behalf of the church during triumph and tragedy.

Ordination is a supernatural event beyond vocational assessment, although it includes appraisal. It is a time when God often gifts or empowers in fresh ways. This continues what was done among prophets, priests, kings, deacons, and apostles. The church invites the presence of God into the life of the candidate. The ceremony is charismatic, inviting supernatural gifting and so, empowerment, filling of the Holy Spirit, and empowerment.¹²⁵

For the C&MA, ordination is not sacramental in the sense of conveying special grace. The C&MA does not believe that a candidate is automatically closer to God than others in either a priestly or personal sense. The denomination believes that the elements of the Lord's Table are ordinances, not the real blood and body of Christ transformed by a consecrated servant. Thus there is no stated relationship of either sacrament or ordinance to ordination. In practice, however, C&MA clergy conduct the ordinances of the Lord's Table and baptism. This is done as a statement of spiritual leadership, like the common practice of elder assistance. The C&MA must add the usual authority to conduct the ordinances to its definition of ordination as an expression of church leadership.

As it is in general in the Christian life, the Spirit works as the candidate submits to God. Ordination thus begins with the heart completely dedicated to God. From there it flows through particular spiritual gifts. The church implores the Lord to do this for the lifetime of a ministry candidate.

For the C&MA, ordination is for men, whose gender is required for eldership. It involves elder leadership, which the C&MA has clarified in recent years to be the final authority in the church. This became a point of contention when a young woman's name was nominated as a communion steward at C&MA General Council. This resulted in a study which stated that elders are male members at the highest level

¹²⁵ Tim Owen, "A Theology of Ordination," (paper, Rocky Mountain District C&MA, Billings, Montana, September 2007)

of servant leadership. This conflicted with the historic C&MA involvement of women in ministry, especially overseas.¹²⁶

With the denomination equally divided about women's ordination, a similar process was devised for women called consecration. It is almost identical to ordination, with the exception that women must be in submission to church elders. They thus cannot be senior pastors, but can serve in many other positions, except those that involve elder authority, that is, positions of ultimate church governance. The singular process of ordination and consecration conflicts with the gender issue because of the C&MA elder authority stance.¹²⁷

Creating a parallel program for women alleviated the need to certify women on church and mission staffs, although doing so without elder authority. This improved decades of licensing women for servant leadership at home and abroad without the requirements that were made of ordained men. It raised women to the same level of theological and practical expertise called for among male candidates. This has made it difficult to find women mentors with the expertise to meet theological standards. However, the next generation will have improved the quality of female ministry candidates with a larger pool of women mentors.

There are, however, many that do not plan to become preaching pastors that are required to seek ordination under a common standard. This is true regardless of gender.

Pastoral Distinctions

The C&MA believes there are specific areas that are unique to the pastoral calling. First, the ordinand is called to preach and teach the Bible. This distinguishes the pastoral calling, demanding theological and biblical training and expertise and

¹²⁶ The Christian & Missionary Alliance, "Report of the Committee to Draft Amendments to the C&MA Governing Documents Consistent with the Council Adopted Definition of 'Elder Authority,'" Minutes of General Council 2000 & Annual Report 1999, Tampa, FL, 226, http://www.cmalliance.org/whoweare/archives/pdfs/annual_reports/2000s/min00rpt99.pdf (accessed Jan. 15, 2008).

¹²⁷ As mentioned, for the purposes of this paper, what is written about ordination in the C&MA, aside from the issue of church authority, applies to consecration for women.

paralleled across history and denominations. Some pastors preach more than they teach or vice versa, but proclamation is present.

Related to this, as well as to elder authority, the C&MA believes that the pastor is uniquely called to protect God's people from spiritual enemies and theological error. This demands biblical and doctrinal knowledge, even beyond that of elders. The C&MA pastor chairs the governance authority and serves for life, while elders have limited board tenure. Although all elders are called to guard the flock from error, the permanent status of ordination narrows the clerical calling.

In addition, pastors are responsible for the spiritual growth and oversight of God's people, a shepherd's responsibility. For this, a pastor must personally care for people and their spiritual welfare, and be able to get along with others. Because of the lifetime commitment, it is especially important to the pastor, although required of all spiritual leaders. Lifetime pastoral care is another area that distinguishes a pastor from within the circle of ministry leaders.

A final uniqueness of the pastoral calling has to do with equipping others to serve. The ministry is centered in helping others to serve, not serving alone. This requires an ability to come alongside others to help them discover their callings, become motivated, and better enabled to serve. When a pastor leaves a congregation, evidence of effectiveness is a sustained ministry after departure.

The goal of the C&MA pastor is to equip to further the Great Commission, and, with its completion, the return of Christ. This especially rings true for the C&MA, a mission-based denomination, which links mission and local churches. As the pastor equips people for ministry, disciples grow worldwide. The pastor, then, works at home to reach the world. This demands expertise in home and international outreach, especially within one's own mission family. The ultimate result of pastoral work is growing worldwide knowledge, glory and obedience of God, and Divine Kingdom building. The C&MA pastor, like the C&MA, believes the church can do more together than it can apart to accomplish the Great Commission.

All of this brings about an occasion to affirm and set apart candidates for ministry. Ordination is a lifetime event, like a wedding or graduation. It is a highlight for the candidate, the church and its leaders, a special event, open to the church and the community, with family representatives. The ceremony underlines both lifetime calling and church-wide responsibility. It is a holy event, a setting apart for a particular calling. This is similar to the setting apart of utensils for the tabernacle. However, C&MA ordination does not include a separation from or elevating of personhood above other Christians. The candidate is set apart within the realm of the callings of all Christians to holiness, neither automatically more holy nor closer to God than other Christians. What is unique is the length and relationship of responsibility of the candidate to the church as a body.

Licensing Prerequisites

Licensing qualifications include a sense of God's call to fulltime ministry, a godly lifestyle, regular practice of spiritual disciplines, passion for evangelism, biblical and theological knowledge, successful applications and accreditation interviews and commitment to the C&MA, including church membership, agreement with lifestyle issues.¹²⁸

The call of God is the supernatural basis of appointment to a lifelong ministry of word and deed, preaching and teaching, spiritual and doctrinal oversight of the church, and equipping of the congregation for ministry at home and abroad. This calling must be demonstrated to the church and its leaders by life and ministry. Consistent word and deed is basic to the C&MA as it is across denominations. Like all church leaders, the ordained model it as a basic underpinning of ministry with no claim or hope of perfection. Growth in Christlikeness precedes ministry skill development and holy integrity demands growth in service given, whatever one's calling.

Academically, there are thirty required hours of Bible, theology or ministry training from Alliance Theological Seminary, a C&MA college or graduate school with a

¹²⁸ Christian & Missionary Alliance, Uniform Policy, E-3.

vocational ministry major, or a non-C&MA seminary, college or graduate school. This is the equivalent of one year of study. Those without formal education may complete the requirement through a Ministerial Studies Program (MSP). Academic requirements may be waived by LO&CC for practical equivalence. This is a fraction of what many denominations require, although it is more than some highly decentralized churches. However, it continues the tradition of welcoming non-traditional candidates, believing that everyone is important to the Great Commission.¹²⁹

All must now complete a C&MA polity course in a C&MA school or through a District office. This course was moved from a post-appointment requirement which was required for ordination to a prerequisite for licensing. The syllabus has been upgraded to include many of the papers and books required for ordination. However, many district LO&CC's require the papers to be done again after licensing at a higher academic standard. For C&MA school graduates, this can mean double preparation. It can also lessen the advantage of attending a denominational school.

Missionaries, including those with lifetime appointment, have further academic and personal requirements, and five categories of ministry. Unlike C&MA pastors, they are required to study one year at a C&MA graduate school. They are appointed through the cooperative effort of the local church, district, National Church Ministries (NCM), and International Ministries. Special focus is given to their ability to serve cross-culturally. Most are ordained through the District in which they do home service in preparation for overseas ministry. Requirements are now more flexible in order to become more movement like for the sake of the mission. This furthers creative possibilities overseas. For instance, second career, tent-making or missionaries with multi-cultural backgrounds have been allowed to serve at later ages,

¹²⁹ Christian & Missionary Alliance, Uniform Policy, E3-2.

perform pre-service overseas, and creatively meet graduate school requirements. As mentioned, this creativity is needed in North American church ministry.¹³⁰

The above requirements must be met for a C&MA license to be considered by a district office. Until this point, candidates are guided by local church leaders and Regional Candidate Directors.

Credentials

C&MA ministry begins with a license, obtained through an accreditation interview with the District Licensing, Ordination, and Consecration Council (LO&CC) or its representatives. An application must be completed with multiple references.

Prerequisites for ministry include an academic transcript, C&MA license, God's calling, full time¹³¹ experience, completion of a C&MA polity course, and thirty hours of ministry related studies or, for those without formal training, a mentored course called the Ministerial Study Program (MSP). An accreditation interview includes questions about spiritual life, motivations and competencies, personal and social abilities, Christian living, theology, and Scripture.¹³²

Licenses and certificates, given upon appointment to a position in a particular location, are available in six categories. The first is for Ordained Official Worker. This is for evangelists, educators, cross-cultural workers, chaplains, retirees, special ministries personnel, and unassigned people or those on approved leave of absence. Official Workers are given spiritual leadership status and authorized to conduct worship and administer the ordinances.

The second credential is that of Unordained Official Worker. This is a two year license for the purpose of preparing to become an Official Worker. It can be renewed annually but is meant to be temporary. Those in fulltime pastoral ministry must enter the ordination process.

¹³⁰ The Christian & Missionary Alliance, 2007 International Ministries Handbook," rev. 2007, The Christian and Missionary Alliance, C1-C10, <https://my.cmalliance.org/resources/books/handbook/handbook/section C.pdf> (accessed August 30, 2007).

¹³¹ Often the 28 hours or more required for fulltime work as determined by the Internal Revenue Service.

¹³² The Christian & Missionary Alliance, "National Church Ministries (NCM) Policy & Procedure Manual," rev. 1/05, https://my.cmalliance.org/resources/books/ncm_manual/ncm/manual.jsp C1-1 (accessed Aug. 30, 2007).

Provisional Official Worker is a third credentialed category. It is primarily for full-time Bible College, seminary or Ministerial Study Program (MSP) students, requiring a re-interview upon appointment. Like Unordained Official Worker, it grants temporary status, designed to move candidates toward Official Worker status.

Fourth, the C&MA offers a Lay Minister License for those without intention of fulltime ministry, but seek local church pastoral assignment. This, like the first three categories, includes both clergy and related tax status.

A Vocational Certificate is the fifth type of credential, for the unordained in nonclergy positions. This would include those serving as ministers or directors of Christian education, music or Christian day schools. This is a common category for women, who cannot be ordained in the C&MA, and for others who do not intend to become pastors. It is a credential that has potential for staff who are developed within a congregation, as well as second career staff. It has little denominational or district oversight, which is centered more on clergy. Without clergy status, it also lacks related tax benefits. It is a credential with smaller numbers, but with added attention such as a voluntary association it has potential to grow.

A sixth and final, but increasingly rare, credential is a Christian Worker Certificate. Districts or churches alone issue this credential to give official recognition to local church leaders that are not clergy.

In addition to credentials, the C&MA has twenty-four clergy and lay ministerial categories, from senior pastor to leader of auxiliary organizations.¹³³ These designations are made by Districts in conjunction with local churches, but must be made within the specifications of the National Office. When interfaced with the six credentialing categories, it complicates the system beyond comparable denominations. This remains from what Reggie McNeal calls the “club mentality” which arose out of the war generation.¹³⁴ The assignment of ministerial categories

¹³³ Christian & Missionary Alliance, National Church Ministries Policy & Procedure Manual, C11-2-3 (accessed August 30, 2007).

¹³⁴ *The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 26 & 71-73.

must be decentralized by the C&MA, a decision of the church and District Superintendent, like the calling of a pastor.

After licensing, a candidate prepares for ordination. This is done under the supervision of the District LO&CC.

Preparation

Standardization, essential to any large organization, eases the administration of ordination for the C&MA. Ordination standards are developed by the National Office. They are carried out by District offices through their Licensing, Ordination, and Consecration Councils (LO&CC), which are chaired by District Superintendents.

C&MA Ordination, like most denominations, requires two years of successful service, mentoring by experienced clergy, oral examination, and reporting, for ordination. Not as common with other denominations are position papers, reading, and in-service training (beyond college or seminary). Because of the C&MA approach, its in-service training is relatively rigorous. Previous attempts to separate out quality missionary candidates before sending them overseas may also explain the relatively high standards.¹³⁵ Basic procedures have been roughly unchanged for fifty years or more.¹³⁶

In-Service Training is generally done through doctrine and ministry seminars facilitated by a district Licensing, Ordaining and Consecration Council (LO&CC). Those who have traditionally prepared, especially through denominational schooling, find some repetition. Many who have completed the C&MA polity course, which, as mentioned, is a recent prerequisite for candidacy, will study similar subjects again. Like learning to drive, however, there is advantage to studying after experience.

The C&MA requires at least two years preparation for ordination after appointment and licensing to one's first vocational ministry position. This includes completing major C&MA-related papers and books. National C&MA requirements stipulate that

¹³⁵ Telephone Interview with Robert Niklaus, author of *All for Jesus* (The standard C&MA history), 11-21-05.

¹³⁶ Telephone Interview with Dwight Anderson, retired C&MA Pastor and District Superintendent, 9-18-05.

candidates read through the Bible twice, and read and report on eight books or papers which focus on the C&MA distinctives. The readings tie the candidate more closely with the C&MA story and beliefs. These currently include *The Fourfold Gospel* and *Wholly Sanctified* (Simpson); *The Children's Bread* (Bailey; on healing); *Essays on Premillennialism* (Foster, ed.), *Go and Make Disciples, An Introduction to Christian Missions* (Greenway); *The Pursuit of God* (Tozer); *All for Jesus* (Niklaus et al; C&MA history); and a "Statement on Sanctification" (C&MA Manual).¹³⁷

Candidates in the ordination process must also write seven position papers to demonstrate proficiency in and loyalty to C&MA beliefs and practices. Required are Christ Our Savior, Christ Our Sanctifier, Christ Our Healer and Christ Our Coming King, all based on the C&MA Fourfold Gospel, which describes our Lord accordingly. Two further papers are on Christ's Body, the Church; and Completing Christ's Mission. These papers are written at a college or graduate level, generally about eight to ten pages in length, with full references, footnotes and specified sub-topics. As mentioned previously, papers written for the C&MA polity course, though now nearly identical to ordination requirements, must often be written more extensively for ordination.

In addition, districts may require two recommended projects. The first of these is a Self-Understanding project, which interacts with personal assessment inventories of giftedness or leadership style. Second is a Life-long Learning project, a five year development plan for personal growth. Both of these are reviewed by one's mentor. These are similar to the Assemblies of God requirement of personal assessment and counseling.

All candidates for ministry must also attend an approved evangelism seminar (e.g. Evangelism Explosion), a Growing a Healthy Church I seminar, and a New Official Workers Forum, which is convened nationally. Further, the candidate must have a sermon reviewed annually by mentor, and complete in-service program usually done via seminars, largely lecture style, adaptable by individual districts.

¹³⁷ Christian & Missionary Alliance, National Church Ministries (NCM) Policy and Procedure Manual, C6-3

Throughout all of this, the candidate is assigned a mentor, with the goal of successfully completing an oral and written exam. Mentoring is generally provided by LO&CC members, or others appointed by them. It is more extensive than other denominations, though similar in length. Mentorship is among the most important elements of candidate development because of the high integration experienced by the candidate, as well as the oral exam. Mentors are assigned by the LO&CC from among its members and/or experienced licensed workers. The mentor encourages progress in meeting ordination requirements, and reviews position papers and sample sermons. C&MA national standards require at least nine meetings per year. This includes at least three meetings, if married, with the candidate's spouse, at least one meeting per year in the candidate's home, and at least one at the church.¹³⁸ Mentors tailor ordination individually on behalf of LO&CC and within stated standards. So, for instance, if a candidate is weak in Old Testament theology, a mentor attends to that area. This puts a lot of responsibility on mentors, whose attention and ability can highly influence preparation. Because of the high level of theology required, a lot of attention is given to theological development. The limited amount of available time can make it challenging to attend to areas like character and skill advancement.

Areas of mentoring discussion include over fifteen personal and ministry topics. The C&MA Pacific Northwest District asks each candidate to select three mentors, one each for the areas of Academic/Theology, Spiritual Formation, and Ministry Skills. This is based on the contention of Robert Clinton that complete mentorship cannot be derived from one person alone.¹³⁹ The mentoring prescribed by the C&MA is more extensive than Episcopalians, who, while requiring it for two years, do not have as extensive of a program, probably because of Episcopalian seminary requirements. It is similar, however, to Wesleyan mentoring, which is based on a mentoring handbook. The C&MA needs a mentoring handbook for its mentors and candidates. This has been left to individual districts, but can be pulled together nationally.

¹³⁸ C&MA, NCM Policy & Procedure Manual, C6-4-5; C&MA Manual, E4-2.

¹³⁹ Licensing, Ordination and Consecration Council, *Guidelines for Mentors*, 10-18-02 (Wilsonville, OR: Pacific Northwest District C&MA).

When all of the above is complete, together with successful service and local church leadership affirmation, a Licensing, Ordination, and Consecration Council LO&CC) gives an oral examination. Questions are asked about spiritual formation, theology, pastoral ethics, life and ministry, and the C&MA.¹⁴⁰ This surpasses the requirement of more decentralized denominations, which commonly include lay members; however, it is not as extensive as some that require original language examination, the lack of which is consistent with C&MA inclusion of the common person. The rigor of this is similar to Presbyterians in theology and Scripture knowledge but without original language requirements. It is beyond the practice of Baptists and Free Churches which involve more lay leadership in the process. This is ironic, because the C&MA historically involves laity. The heavy theological content of the C&MA oral exam sharply contrasts with its traditionally “big-tent” theological stance, especially so when required beyond preaching pastors. The C&MA prides itself in a doctrinal statement which was only adopted in the nineteen sixties. It is only a page long as compared to the lengthy statements of the reformed. These are the roots of Simpson, who intentionally broadened them for the sake of the mission. The oral exam must be less rigorous for non-preaching pastors, while retaining its standard for those who preach.

Ordination is recognized through a public ceremony in the candidate’s District and/or church. Suggested vows include persuasion of calling, acceptance of C&MA beliefs, organization, relationships and goals; and commitment to Scripture, personal integrity and spirituality. The service is conducted by the LO&CC and led by the District Superintendent, as an act of the wider church.¹⁴¹ The broader church representation is similar to most denominations, but especially similar to the Wesleyans. Participation beyond the local church is also affirmed through centralization, expressed through the prominence of District Superintendents, which shares Methodist roots with the Wesleyan Church.

¹⁴⁰ Christian & Missionary Alliance, National Church Ministries Policy & Procedure Manual, C6-7-16.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., C6-17-18.

Ordination as Resistance

C&MA ordination resists natural tendencies which retard kingdom advancement. As a denomination that seeks to innovate, the C&MA is prone to forget its place in the story of God's people. Ordination counters the tendency to ignore kingdom precedent and practices historic continuity, important with or without apostolic succession. It consciously joins salvation history within the larger story of God at work in his church and furthers the narrative of God's growing reign across time, cultures, and denominations.

Setting people apart for ministry as a wider body also resists individualism, which the Christian and Missionary Alliance addresses in its reason for being. Cross-ecclesiastical connections are reflected in ordination across church traditions, even among highly decentralized denominations. Ordination furthers relationships between local churches that may not normally work together. It expresses the functioning of the body as a larger unit, with many members fitting together across regional and worldwide families of churches (1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4). Ordination thus participates in the church as a whole as God's kingdom expands in its community, region and world.

Finally, ordination, when willing to adjust to a changing context, resists the tendency of a large, older organization like the C&MA to atrophy. Like the best of overseas ministry, ordination contextualizes in recognition of church and social change. Practicing innovation at the credentialing level works against natural mechanisms that stop a Christian movement from experiencing the creativity of God.

We have examined the story of ordination in Scripture, through church history, across denominational lines, and within the C&MA. Change begins with those that are leading the present story of C&MA ordination. Conversing with District Superintendents through survey will determine openness and direction for change for the sake of the mission.

CHAPTER 5

C&MA ORDINATION STORY LEADER DIALOGUE:

DISTRICT ORDINATION RESEARCH

We have listened to the story of ordination in salvation history as portrayed in the Bible and as it has continued throughout the history of the church, across denominational lines, and in the C&MA, which began as an interdenominational society. As the C&MA has grown, its ordination practices have become increasingly sophisticated, but have not changed for fifty years or more. The C&MA is looking at every aspect of its mission in order to recover the movement-like qualities that sustained its growth until the last decade. It is now examining its ordination practices in a rapidly changing environment which includes growing numbers of multi-staff churches with candidates from non-traditional backgrounds.

Reasons for Conversation

Because of their influence on C&MA decision-making, I surveyed District Superintendents concerning the Uniform Policy on Ordination and their opinion of different ordination varieties. I also hoped to learn what issues there are in multiplying credentialing categories.

District Superintendents have great influence in C&MA legislation, including ordination policies. They meet annually as a group at a District Leadership Forum, through which they recommend policy changes to the C&MA President and Board of Directors. The Forum pertains especially to church ministry which includes credentialing. Because they implement and oversee regional credentialing, their theological and practical viewpoint is critical to evaluating the present state of C&MA ordination. The voice of District Superintendents in the Leadership Forum is

a primary means of recommending change to policy-makers in National Church Ministries, the division which oversees credentialing, as well as to legislative bodies.

Questions and Answers

I distributed surveys twice by email to twenty-nine C&MA District Superintendents on August 28 and October 12, 2007. The Uniform Policy of Ordination was presented at the beginning of the survey. Five questions were asked, with opportunity for comment after each question and after the entire survey. Each question involved rating a response in a range of one to five according to given criteria. Three of the five questions had multiple subcategories. I asked participants to evaluate time and resource utilization of a uniform ordination policy as compared to a system with varying types of ordination, how many categories would be preferred and what they should be if they were multiplied. I also asked District Superintendents about the number and makeup of ordination candidates in their districts.

Conversation Successes and Challenges

The geographical district response is statistically significant and gives a clear indication of District Superintendent opinion. Of those surveyed, 55 percent (16 out of 29) of the District Superintendents responded. This included 73 percent of the representative geographic districts (16 out of 22), and none of the seven Intercultural districts.¹⁴² It also did not include two large districts which did not answer the survey. The reader should note that many of those that responded were personal acquaintances from my recent involvement in district ministry.

I was disappointed to receive no response from Intercultural Districts. However, this in itself has implications for recommendations. The difficulty of involving Intercultural District churches, who did not respond at all to my survey, indicates that any change of ordination must be very deliberate. The size of the C&MA makes change difficult, especially for non-English speaking churches, whose common ordination standard is a large accomplishment. However, many of them will join the

¹⁴² C&MA Intercultural Districts consist of Cambodian, Haitian, Hmong, Korean, Vietnamese and two Spanish Districts which operate in their own languages.

story of English-speaking geographic districts in the years to come. Flexibility in ordination policy decision-making is necessary because of first generation immigrant candidates from non-traditional and/or bi-vocational situations.

C&MA districts vary in the number and distribution of ministry candidates. This affects the perspectives of district leaders, which are important for interpreting responses. Those with greater numbers and wider variations of candidates have greater challenges with the Uniform Policy of Ordination. The lack of response from two larger districts in itself is indicative of greatly competing time and resources which must be aided by refining C&MA ordination.

C&MA Story Participants

National Church Ministries directs the C&MA in the United States, which consists of 400,000 congregants in 2000 churches. Congregations are organized in twenty nine districts, including twenty two geographic districts and seven ethnic districts.

Intercultural districts, largely consisting of first generation immigrants, traverse geographic districts and operate in their own languages.

C&MA Districts are led by District Superintendents, who chair District Executive Committees and Licensing, Ordination, and Consecration Councils (LO&CC).

District Superintendents are elected by District Conferences and are funded by the C&MA National Office, to whom they report through the Vice President of Church Ministries.

Missionary candidates are licensed by the Districts in which they prepare for overseas ministry. After appointment, missionaries, now numbering 900 in fifty-eight nations, are overseen by C&MA International Ministries (IM), which has its U.S. divisional counterpart in National Church Ministries. Missionary candidate credentialing acknowledges fraternal relationships that the United States C&MA has with related churches in eighty-one countries. Some of these have organized as autonomous denominations and, in turn, send missionaries elsewhere that work with American missionaries. Similar ordination practices facilitate these relationships.

Table 1

Number of candidates for C&MA consecration/ordination				
	Range	Average	Median	Mode ¹⁴³
10-20	10 to 60			20
20-30		29	25.5	
30-40				
40-50				
50-60				

Districts have a range of 10 to 60 ordination candidates, averaging 29 and most frequently numbering 20 (Table 1). One District Superintendent comments, “Our numbers and categories vary but remain within the 20-30 range from year to year.”

¹⁴³ Most frequent response.

Table 2

Number of C&MA candidates compared to past numbers				
Response	Range	Average	Median	Mode
5 Much Greater	2 to 5			
4 More				
3 About the Same		3.13	3	3
2 Less				
1 Much Less				

According to those surveyed, there is a slight rise in the number of candidates in general comparison to the past. On average, there are a relatively static number of ordination candidates, with some exceptions (Table 2). Some districts have declined in the number of candidates for ordination, although others, including my former district, have grown. One District Superintendent comments, “As our churches continue to grow and add staff, the number of individuals in ordination/consecration has mushroomed over the last 8 years. 40% of our official workers are in the ordination/consecration track.”

Table 3

Comparison of present percentages of candidates who are not senior pastors to past percentages				
Response	Range	Average	Median	Mode
5 Much greater present percentage of non-senior pastors	3 to 5			
4 More				
3 About the Same percentages		3.63	3	3
2 Less				
1 Much less present percentage of non-senior pastors				

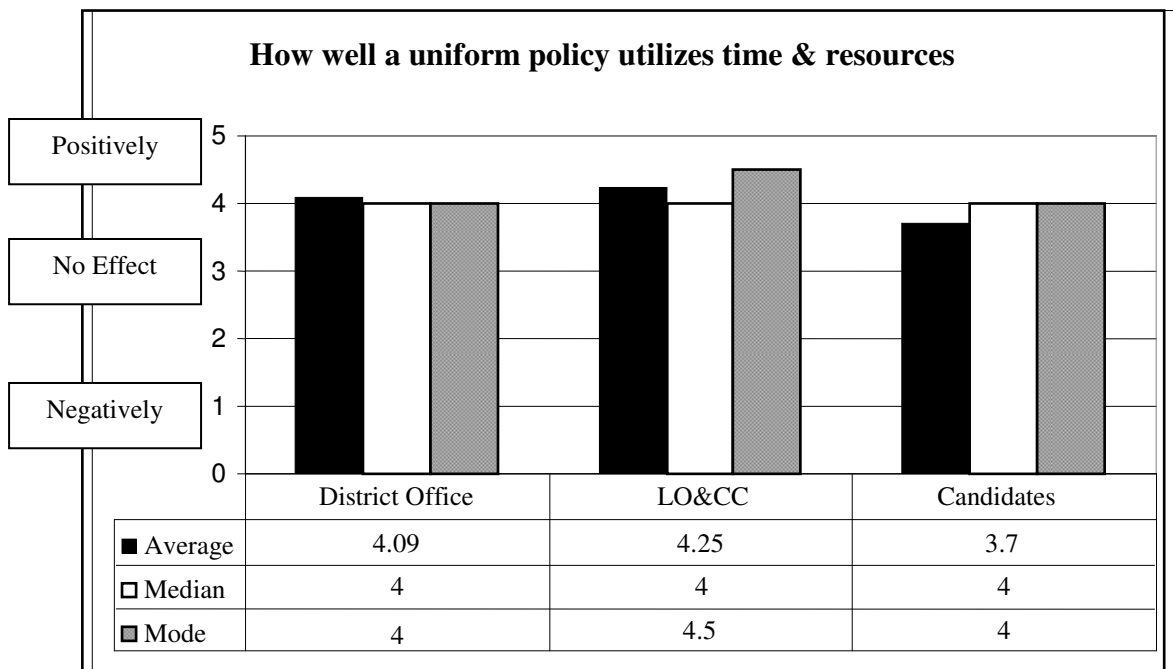
District candidate pools have similar or greater portions of candidates who are not senior pastors today as compared to the past (Table 3). This trend is a major indicator of a changing accreditation environment and which I experienced in the district where I served. It is further supported by unsolicited comments from 23 percent (5 out of 22) of geographic District Superintendents about growing portions of non-senior pastoral ordination candidates. After rating (1) how the number of candidates they have compare to past numbers and (2) how the percentage of candidates that are not senior pastors compares to the past, their voluntary thoughts included the following:

- More churches are adding staff positions...There are...less unordained candidates who are willing to serve in a solo/senior position at the start...
- Usually there are more “staff” personnel than “senior pastors.” Of course, now there are more WOMEN [respondent’s emphasis] in the Consecration track.

- Only 2 of 37 [candidates] are senior pastors.¹⁴⁴
- [There are] more teams, internships/apprenticeships with no plans for a lead [senior pastoral] role.¹⁴⁵

Story Leader Opinions

Table 4



District Superintendents generally affirm the use of a common ordination program. This is reflected in the positive ratings of the use of time and resources of the Uniform Policy by District Office, LO&CC, and candidates (see Table 4).

¹⁴⁴ Only 5% of this respondent's ordination candidates are senior pastors.

¹⁴⁵ Ordination Research Compilation, Question 5, Comments, Appendix B.

The Uniform Policy places the burden of creating standards on the C&MA National Office. This lessens the district workload of and facilitates movement between districts. It also retains a high standard across regions and ministry positions. Some feel very strongly about this, although some sense that a one track system is difficult for candidates. Those who are especially affected include emerging young or second career leaders and specialists in music, counseling, or various age groups. Some are given titles, such as directors or ministers of stated ministries.

Table 5

How well the uniform (singular) system of ordination presently utilizes time and resources			
Response	District Office	LO&CC	Candidates
	Range		
5 Positively	2 to 5	2 to 5	1 to 5
4			
3 No effect			
2			
1 Negatively			

District Superintendents admit that the uniform policy benefits administrators more than participants. This is clear from wider differences in the range of time and resource utilization for candidates than for administrators (Table 5). It is also indicated by the lower average ratings of candidate advantage (Table 4). One respondent notes how the Uniform Policy conflicts with changing expectations. “The younger, emerging generation is not turned in to (as a general rule) to ‘uniform’ anything.” Another District Superintendent suggests “...the uniform program...would be better if more individualized training were designed for each candidate. Some things need to be uniform to ensure quality of doctrine, character, etc. but an individualized program to develop each one’s ministry to overcome weaknesses and utilize strengths would be better.”¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ Ordination Research Compilation, Question 1, Comments, Appendix B.

Those surveyed acknowledge the difficulties of the Uniform Policy for candidates, but believe it simplifies a more candidate-centered approach. One comments:

The Uniform nature of our policy saves us much time because we don't have to reinvent the wheel from one district to another. It also represents a safeguard that each district is maintaining at least the same minimum level of standards for those who are pursuing ordination/consecration. It benefits candidates in that they can easily transfer from one district to another without having to jump through additional hoops.¹⁴⁷

Story Adjustments

Change is not quick for a denomination founded by an entrepreneurial leader. If alive today, A.B. Simpson would find that the C&MA is a large organization with a well-established story whose leaders seek to learn from the best of what God has done in its history, including its ordination practices. This is evident in survey responses that call for refining the current Uniform Policy. Among these respondents, some think that adjusting candidate curriculum can improve C&MA ordination. This involves narrowing core requirements and incorporating existing specialized training (e.g. in youth ministry) into ordination.

Others recommend strengthening the distinctions between provisional (initial) and full licensing and even withholding the latter until ordination. Both of these possibilities will be considered later in this paper which considers changing the number of varieties of ordination.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ Ordination Research Compilation, Question 1, Comments, Appendix B.

¹⁴⁸ Ordination Research Compilation, Question 2, Comments & Question 6, Other, Appendix B.

Table 6

Openness to having varieties of ordination/consecration for differing types of ministry				
Response	Range	Average	Median	Mode
5 Yes	1 to 5			
4 Possibly			4	4
3 Unsure		3.5		
2 Probably not				
1 No				

Most District Superintendents will consider varying categories of ordination, but they have strong opinions about changing the present system. This is reflected in comparing the wide range of opinions about varying credentialing categories with the general openness to consider it (see Table 6). As one puts it, “The ‘one size fits all’ is difficult. It is also made more difficult by some IRS requirements for ministerial recognition and benefit.”¹⁴⁹ Another respondent connects varying ordination categories with the need to for a simple way for candidates to move between them:

....If there were different types of ordination/consecration, the process could be designed to better match the type of ministry which could alleviate some of the frustration experienced by those who feel as if the system is “one size fits all.” However, having different levels of ordination and/or consecration would necessitate a further process which individuals would have to go through if they sensed God’s call to a different type of ministry. For instance, we have some senior pastors who used to be worship pastors. A different level of ordination would have necessitated some type of process to sustain or grant ordination as a Senior Pastor.¹⁵⁰

The challenge of changing ordination context and needs, with varying intensity, is evident across much of the C&MA. In addition to being supported by the data, in my district experience both the number of candidates and the percentage of non-preaching pastors were growing substantially, vastly increasing the workload of staff and

¹⁴⁹ From Ordination Research Compilation, Question 2, Comments, Appendix B.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

LO&CC. This taxed shrinking district resources, taking away from pastoral development and church multiplication efforts. Especially noticeable were our struggles to motivate multi-staff candidates to complete requirements.

Table 7

How well a system of ordination/consecration that varies according to types of ministry would utilize time & resources				
Response	Range	Average	Median	Mode
5 Positively	1 to 5			
4				4
3 No effect		3.17	3	
2				
1 Negatively				

While most District Superintendents are open to change, they are slightly less certain that varying ordination categories will mean wiser stewardship than the present system. Some believe that it would create an unmanageable situation for already burdened district staffs and committees. The outcome of the proposed solution is unknown until it is attempted according to one. However, the most frequent response leans toward a positive effect (see Table 7). According to one, "...the process could be designed to better match the type of ministry which could alleviate some of the frustration experienced by those who feel as if the system is 'one size fits all.' This would help the district office, LOCC and the candidate be more productive in dealing with the core vital issues of ordination or consecration."¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ From Ordination Research Compilation, Question 3, Comments, Appendix B.

Multiplying Varieties

Table 8

Number of preferred categories if the C&MA system of ordination/consecration varied according to types of ministry				
	Range	Average	Median	Mode
8	2 to 8			
7				
6				
5				
4				
3		3.3	3	
2				2.5
1				

If ordination varies, most prefer the number of positions be limited to between two and four categories (Table 8). Many suggest varying ordination categories of ordination for senior preaching pastors, who have C&MA elder authority, and other staff members. This recommendation is due to strong consensus in retaining the current standard for preaching pastors: “At least Sr. Pastor and Teaching Pastors with oversight authority and all other staff requirements for them should be higher and more intensely theological [than other staff position requirements].”¹⁵²

A number of District Superintendents would consider varying ordination categories for those with specialties in counseling/pastoral care, youth, and worship/music, which is of particular concern because of ceremonial visibility. The following statement, made by one that disagrees with varying ordination categories, illustrates the tension that ordination creates between legal, public worship, and theological requirements. It also demonstrates the need for creative solutions to C&MA accreditation:

¹⁵² Ordination Research Compilation, Question 2, Comments, Appendix B.

While I don't think different categories of ordination are necessary, it would be appropriate to grant an IRS approved level of licensing for worship pastors who have no interest in the preaching, teaching side of things, yet their sacerdotal involvement in the planning and execution of a worship service should qualify them for the housing allowance benefit. I get most push back from this area. Those who are seminary trained want to go through with ordination. Those who are primarily musicians, have little interest in doing the necessary work. A few times, they have had very little Bible or theology, which to me is not good, but that is what senior pastors and church leadership boards hired.¹⁵³

Dialogue Reflections

District Superintendents believe strongly in a Uniform Policy of Ordination because it promotes a common certification standard across the denomination. This facilitates their work and enables licensed workers to move readily across districts and between Church and International Ministries. They realize the challenges that it gives to candidates but acknowledge how a singular standard facilitates administration. District Superintendents will consider multiplying categories of ordination if there is strong reason for change and varieties are few in number. There must also be a design for moving between categories.

Paul Borden is one of the few who has reversed the downward trend of a region through middle judicatory (district or regional) denominational leadership. This happened by changing an administrative to a transformational leadership development model. Borden contends that denominational functions should not mirror those of the local church (e.g. Christian Education, youth, evangelism or missions) but be those of certifying, networking, resourcing, and channeling.¹⁵⁴ The strong involvement of District Superintendents in the survey shows that credentialing is a major C&MA district concern, demonstrating the priority of certification as one of their major functions. However, the C&MA must resist the comfort of simply certifying, lest it work against Borden's other stated priorities of networking, resourcing and channeling. Reducing the amount of time spent in certification will enable districts to spend greater time on the other areas to support the greater mission.

¹⁵³ Ordination Research Compilation, Question 3, Comments, Appendix B.

¹⁵⁴ Borden Consultation, C&MA District Superintendents, Metropolitan District Office, Newark, NJ, January 6-7, 2005. Borden serves with American Baptist Churches of the West.

Certification can detract from other priorities of the National Office, district offices, local churches, and candidates. Churches, large and small, welcome credentialing, but it must enhance, not take away from wider concerns. Denominations like the C&MA must resist the temptation of making credentials an end in themselves.

The survey reveals the challenging priorities of rapidly growing multiple staff churches. Some candidate resistance comes from multiple staff candidates and their supervising senior pastors, who find certification unrelated to their primary mission. Acute time utilization needs and less dependence on district support bring resistance in fulfilling ordination standards. This situation can be relieved by simplifying and specializing certification.

The C&MA must beware of becoming the very institution that Simpson resisted. The C&MA has endeavored to recover a movement mentality. Credentialing tempts with the opposite, a club mentality. Ready satisfaction can come from maintaining things the way they are, with little flexibility for adjustments in culture or mission. Rigid uniformity also moves against a heritage that built non-traditional routes to ministry.

The C&MA is over one hundred years old and many times larger than the organization that Simpson founded. Some degree of standardization is essential, but over-organization restricts development. Minimal standardization of ordination is a good first step toward revitalizing Simpson's vision for the CMA.

The story of ordination across biblical, historical, denominational and C&MA lines continues as leaders consider the current state of credentialing in a denomination that now has a long history but longs to recover momentum. The Uniform Policy has served well, but must be reexamined in a changing context. This will be done by considering change that retains the best of C&MA practice while adjusting to a new kind of candidate.

CHAPTER 6

ORDINATION AND THE CONTINUING STORY

The C&MA joins a story of setting people apart for public ministry that dates back to ancient times. Biblical leaders ceremonially initiated those whom God called to serve His people. The community below affirmed an inner calling from above. The early church adapted to God's creativity in His expanding kingdom as it dedicated its leaders. From the beginning, it was a function of the wider church, which worked together to further the gospel. Beyond the biblical era, the church ordained people to help it serve better together. Since the reformation, ordination has been held across denominational lines in tension with the priesthood of believers. This was experienced by the C&MA which began as a movement to involve everyone in proclaiming Christ, but assumed ordination. C&MA credentialing became increasingly sophisticated as the denomination grew, centered on a Uniform Policy of Ordination with a singular standard. Recent leveling of growth has caused the denomination to reexamine its procedures, including those of ordination. Denominational leaders are open to change but desire to retain the strengths of current procedures, especially for preaching pastors.

Like the best of C&MA overseas ministry, ordination must contextualize in a rapidly changing environment. Growing life-expectancy and multiplying educational options are producing more and more second career and home-grown candidates. Those entering vocational ministry have an increasing variety of specializations. Some districts are setting apart candidates from a growing number of large, multi-staff churches. This has taxed the creativity of District Licensing, Ordaining, and Consecration Councils (LO&CC) to maintain a singular ordination policy. This has become especially difficult as the government has tightened legal clerical boundaries. The C&MA recognizes that change is needed. The question is whether to improve the present system or to multiply categories of ordination.

Improving the Present Ordination System

Some argue that the changing ministry context can be addressed by refining the credentialing model which has been in place for over fifty years. This can be done by creating a central core of ordination standards, with specializations offered as supplemental courses. This is recommended by a survey respondent, and is similar to current C&MA system. Continuing a common core with added specializations retains the high standard of ordination and refines what is already in place. However, the present common core is too great for a growing variety of candidate responsibilities. Keeping things the way they are does not address the multi-staff issue, and it does not reflect the C&MA tradition of drawing from non-traditional preparation routes. This alternative becomes more workable by decreasing the size of the common core of studies. However, it has the danger of moving candidates into senior pastorates with inadequate preparation.

Another potential improvement is to more clearly delineate between provisional licenses and complete licenses. This is also recommended by a survey respondent. It addresses the little distinction that is made in everyday ministry between those that are ordained and those that are in the ordination process. This is a challenge for a non-sacramental denomination which does not believe that clergy convey special grace. Deepening the distinction between candidates and the ordained highly motivates success in the formation process, a strong argument. It also clarifies the meaning of ordination, while retaining its high standard. On the other hand, it does not address the increase in the number of multi-staff candidates. In some districts, the credentialing context now consists of a majority of candidates from staffs of midsize and large churches are the majority. Refining the present system improves credentialing but does not address the huge change in the church environment which districts are beginning to experience.

Reasons to Multiply but Limit Categories of Ordination

In today's context of increasing complexity, the research of Thom Rainer and Eric Geiger proves that simplicity helps churches grow measurably more than others.

A simple church is designed around a straightforward and strategic process that moves people through the stages of spiritual growth. The leadership and the church are clear about the process (clarity) and are committed to executing it. The process flows logically (movement) and is implemented in each area of the church (alignment). The church abandons everything that is not in the process (focus).¹⁵⁵

Because C&MA churches face the same complexity collectively, improving the clarity, movement, alignment and focus of the denomination will also further its mission, embodying movement-like recovery. Simplicity can be applied to credentialing by clarifying ordination categories, developing a logical flow between them, aligning each element around them, and abandoning anything that is not necessary to the process. These changes are best implemented by multiplying categories of ordination.

The C&MA must develop more than one type of ordination because of its changing ministry context, including growing numbers of multi-staff members whose gifting is not preaching. Multiplying ordination categories better stewards the time and resources of candidates, churches, LO&CC, and district staff. This change retains the high standard of ordination for preaching pastors, and adds flexibility for others. It reduces the discouragement which the current system presents to those with a ministry that is not primarily preaching. It also better stewards the limited resources of C&MA District and national offices. Simplifying, but multiplying categories lessens the national, regional and candidate workload, freeing them up to fulfill their greater mission. It counters any possibility that retarded growth is due to a club mentality, which spends too much time in club management and membership procedures.¹⁵⁶ Multiplying categories better utilizes the dwindling resources and flattening structure of the C&MA which mirrors trends in society and the church at large. It significantly reduces the workload of related offices, enabling them to better attend to other priorities.

Multiplying categories is further supported by the New Testament pattern of adjusting procedures according to changing circumstances for the good of the mission. As

¹⁵⁵ Thom. S. Rainer & Eric Geiger, *Simple Church* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2006), 68.

¹⁵⁶ R. McNeal, *The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 26 & 71-73.

mentioned above, growing church needs produced specialists in benevolence (Acts 9) and preaching and teaching (1 Tim. 3 & 5, cf. Acts 20:28). With mission preceding structure, regional and international ventures meant setting apart some as leaders of leaders (Gal. 2) and others for international ministry (Acts 13). Similarly, the C&MA has creatively organized overseas to complete the task. The same flexibility is needed at home.

In addition, while multi-staff issues are not issues for all districts, other districts must help those whose changing environment calls for change. Working together furthers the greater mission for which the C&MA is named while freeing up resources for every district's priorities of networking, resourcing and channeling.¹⁵⁷ In turn, this will grow churches everywhere with districts already prepared for multiple staff needs.

Moreover, varying ordination categories recognizes those that pastor but don't preach, affirming the diversity of the body. It attends to those that lead, sometimes without primary recognition (1 Cor. 12). This is highly valued in the C&MA, which includes as many as possible in the mission. It responds to cultural trends which expect more individually tailored services. Some of this is because of growing technology which, while growing individual expectations, can bring more flexibility to the uniform policy.

The C&MA must continue to return to a movement-like stance in order to accomplish its mission. Re-shaping ordination is part of returning to a movement at home.

Varying but limiting categories of ordination accomplishes this.

Alternatives for Multiplying Categories of Ordination

There are several ways to vary ordination categories. One option is to totally decentralize credentialing by giving districts or local churches control over ordination standards. In this model mentors from within or alongside the local church highly invest in candidates according to individual needs. This is similar to some Baptist

¹⁵⁷ Cf. Borden in chapter 5 above.

practices, but also to highly personalized candidate mentoring in the history of the church. This brings highly individualized, personally tailored programs, similar to the health club, touted by Reggie McNeal as a model for individual spiritual growth in local churches.¹⁵⁸ It fits cultural trends of specialization and individualism. This model builds on recent efforts to bring the Ministerial Study Program for C&MA lay training online through a denominational graduate school.

However, this alternative is highly idealistic because the present system already highly taxes mentors. It eliminates a common standard and quality control. Decentralizing makes it difficult for candidates and clergy to move between churches and districts with the risk of re-ordination upon each appointment. It also radically decreases the sense in which ordination is a historic, theological, and missional act of the wider church. Finally, decentralized ordination reinforces the cultural individualism which goes against the community of Christian worldview.

Secondly, the C&MA can limit ordination to preaching pastors, like other denominations, including the Assemblies of God, Episcopalians, Evangelical Free Churches, and Wesleyans studied above.¹⁵⁹ This raises the standard of ordination by focusing preparation on preaching pastors alone. It simplifies the process by decreasing the number and variety of ordination candidates. This model lowers the workload of National Office, District Offices, and LO&CC members. However, limiting ordination to preaching pastors raises barriers between clergy and laity, creating more of a separate clergy class. Thereby, it also counters the every-person involvement that propels the C&MA movement. Further, this model neglects the desire of C&MA churches to ordain beyond the senior pastorate. Finally, the C&MA does not need to raise its standard but to adjust it to a changing context. This can occur by adjusting ordination in a way which fits the C&MA story.

¹⁵⁸ *The Present Future*, 74-80.

¹⁵⁹ One way to do this is to expand Consecration, the C&MA clergy equivalent for women, to all licensees except preaching pastors.

Multiplying But Limiting Ordination Categories

A third and recommended alternative is to multiply the number of clergy categories to two, with a clear process for moving from one to the other. For instance, the C&MA can have the categories of Senior Ordination and Associate Ordination.¹⁶⁰

Table 9

Comparison of Present and Multiple Ordination Categories			
	Current	Proposed	
	<i>Uniform Policy</i>	<i>Associate Ordination</i>	<i>Senior Ordination</i>
Number of categories	1	2	
Ordination Privileges			
1. Legal Clergy Status	Yes	Yes	Yes
2. Elder Governance Authority		Under one with Sr. Ordination	
3. Conduct Ordinances			
4. Open to women under current C&MA definition of elder authority	No	Yes	No
Who is required to have it			
Preachers or teachers of theology at least 20% of yr.	Yes	No	Yes
Exceptions to requirement			
1. Lay, bi-vocational or interim pastors	Yes	No	Yes
2. Those entering ministry after 40 yrs. of age	No		

Both categories have legal clergy status and are required to conduct the ordinances which symbolize governance authority. Associate Ordination includes and is a prerequisite for those that are preparing for Senior Ordination. Those with Associate Ordination serve under the authority of someone who with Senior Ordination; the supervising pastor therefore decides about a staff member's conducting of the ordinances. Because of this, Associate Ordination is open to women with worship responsibilities under the C&MA definition of elder authority (see Table 9).

¹⁶⁰ This is similar to the Evangelical Covenant Church, which has Ordination to Word and Sacrament, and Ordination to Specialized Ministry. Also cf. the Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church of America in chapter 3 above.

Table 10

Comparison of Present and Multiple Ordination Administration			
	Current	Proposed	
	<i>Uniform Policy</i>	<i>Associate Ordination</i>	<i>Senior Ordination</i>
Requirements	8 books/papers 7 position papers 2 projects (optional) Evangelism seminar Church Health seminar Official Workers Seminar	50% of Sr. Ordination Requirements Half-thesis length paper (25-50 pages); length of combined Polity Course papers, integrated with a an overview of C&MA theology & vision, personal profile & ministry statement	Same as is current, except that papers are combined in a thesis length document (50-100 pages)
Delivery System	LO&CC seminars	C&MA Polity Course - online & modular	LO&CC seminars
Supplemental Courses	LO&CC	C&MA Colleges in consultation with Regional Candidate Directors	C&MA Colleges in consultation with Regional Candidate Directors
2 year mentorship	LO&CC member or designee	Sr. Pastor or designee	LO&CC member or designee
Who is Responsible	LO&CC	C&MA Colleges in consultation with Regional Candidate Directors	LO&CC
Oral Exam			
Basis	Closed Bible	Half-thesis length paper	Thesis Length Paper
Who is Responsible	LO&CC	LO&CC subcommittee	LO&CC
Ceremony oversight	LO&CC	Local Church	LO&CC

Associate Ordination requirements in this model are about fifty percent of those required for Senior Ordination, with which a core curriculum is shared. Associate Ordination candidates primarily prepare by completing the Alliance Polity Course, which is overseen completely by C&MA colleges and graduate schools in consultation with the Regional Candidate Directors. These institutions develop modular and online courses for those from other backgrounds or those not able to commute and offer supplemental courses especially in pastoral theology for those without academic ministry degrees in consultation with Regional Candidate

Directors. A final half-thesis length paper (25-50 pages), the combined length of the present Polity Course papers, is required to graduate from the Polity Course.¹⁶¹ This document includes an overview of C&MA Theology and vision, integrated with a personal profile and ministry statement. After two years of mentored ministry the paper is the basis for an oral examination. This is conducted by a subcommittee of LO&CC, similar to present accreditation interviews.¹⁶² A public ceremony of Associate Ordination moves from district to local church oversight (see Table 10).

Senior Ordination under this model is required of any that teach theology or preach at least twenty percent of the year with some exceptions, such as a lay, bi-vocational or interim pastors or those that enter ministry after forty years of age.¹⁶³ Associate Ordination is a prerequisite for Senior Ordination, which LO&CC, local churches or International Ministries may choose to require of any candidate. The Associate Ordination paper is expanded to full thesis length (50 to 100 pages) for Senior Ordination. The paper, written in sections, is equal to present combined requirements, overseen entirely by LO&CC and the basis of an oral examination which continues to be conducted with full committee (see tables 9 & 10)

The advantage of this alternative is that it recognizes clergy beyond senior pastors alone. It gives legal status to staff pastors and retains the high standard for preaching, leaving the option to churches or districts to require senior ordination for staff members. It recognizes the difference that exists between senior and associate leadership. That is, a senior pastor chairs a C&MA board, while staff members serve ex officio at his discretion, especially in a larger church, and ex officio. It simplifies the work required for everyone, cutting requirements for staff pastors, their mentors and districts, by about fifty percent. On the other hand, it gives them the option of moving toward senior ordination. This can be required by districts or churches desiring a higher standard for associates. This model fits better with the majority of protestant denominations studied above which ordain only preaching pastors by

¹⁶¹ The Alliance Polity Course requires position papers which can be upgraded to meet ordination requirements.

¹⁶² Currently, the entire LO&CC examines every candidate whereas an accreditation interview for an initial license is conducted by a subcommittee.

¹⁶³ Cf. the Wesleyan Church in chapter 3 above.

developing a unique C&MA senior category of ordination but recognizes the C&MA tradition of ordaining associates.

The recommended model also benefits from more closely integrating ordination with C&MA colleges and graduate schools which oversee everything except mentored ministry and the oral examination for Associate Ordination. This brings more full and part-time students to denominational schools of higher education whose costs are covered by tuition. The relationships that develop with C&MA institutions of higher education will be of mutual benefit for years to come.

The disadvantage of this alternative is that it creates a separate class of clergy in a denomination that affirms lay involvement. It also reinforces a sacramental view of clergy in a denomination that is not sacramental. However, these temptations already exist in present church roles and can be addressed by considering these to be varieties, not levels, of ordination.

Ordination plus Lay Professional

The recommended alternative of Associate and Senior Ordination must be supplemented with a third credentialed category of Lay Professional for those with specializations who do not preach or conduct the ordinances.

Table 11

Proposed Multiple Ordination & Lay Professional Models			
	Associate Ordination	Senior Ordination	Lay Professional
Number of categories	3		
Privileges			
1. Legal Clergy Status	Yes	Yes	No
2. Elder Governance Authority	Under one with Sr. Ordination		
3. Conduct Ordinances			
4. Open to women under current C&MA definition of elder authority	Yes	No	Yes
Primary Support	Mentor	Mentor	Local Church
Secondary Support	Local Church	LO&CC	Assoc. of Lay Professionals
Overseer	One with Sr. Ordination	District Supt.	One with Assoc. or Sr. Ordination
Ceremony	Local Church	LO&CC	Optional and Local

People credentialed with this third category are supervised entirely under the authority of one with Senior or Associate Ordination. Lay Professionals also participate in an association model of peers in their specialties¹⁶⁴ They complete a simple application, which would be similar to that of candidates for ordination. Training and orientation is conducted by the local church, which decides whether or not to require the Alliance Polity course or other supplemental courses offered by C&MA institutions. Networking is voluntary, but highly attractive through a quality program offered by a fulltime director. The church is highly encouraged to pay an annual fee to support the association which includes personal support and regional and national gatherings. There is no clergy status for this position, but strong opportunities for affinity support and development some of which is through a national website and C&MA institutions. A public ceremony is optional for the local

¹⁶⁴ Cf. the Episcopal Church in chapter 3 above.

church, possibly conducted with installation. A national director oversees this association, but each local church assumes primary supervision (see table 11).

A Lay Professional category with an association model raises support for those who serve churches professional in non-pastoral roles. It recognizes the growing number of specialists, including those second career people and/or people employed by their home churches. This alternative also recovers the C&MA movement –like heritage of empowering every servant, clergy or lay person. It brings together resources for ministry specialists through synergistic networking through which every party is improved. It recognizes the contributions that second career and specially trained leaders bring to one another. The Lay Professional model also admits the limitations that the C&MA as a church-related organization has to offer to those who are not serving as clergy. It has some similarities to the International Fellowship of Alliance Professionals (IFAP), which links those who serve overseas in tent-making capacities. The resulting network empowers more of the church as it was empowered in the early days of the C&MA.

The primary challenge of the Lay Professional model is added administration, particularly with an Association Coordinator. It also does not fulfill requirements for government tax advantage which is not possible for those without public worship responsibilities. However, it empowers the growing number of lay people who are already serving and does so in a legal fashion without coercing them toward clergy status. It also reduces concern for hierarchy by validating those who are not clergy but work for the church. Resources expended will be recovered as the Lay Professional model furthers the C&MA vision.

Further Enhancing Accreditation

The C&MA, like other denominations, must re-organize and include a position in its structure that oversees credentialing. This new position can consolidate C&MA resources by working closely with the office of Candidate Development Director. Credentialing is currently a function of the C&MA Church Ministries, but has no director. Lower resources required for simplified clergy ordination will recover

additional administrative costs for a credentialing director. It is supported by the contention that certification is one of four primary functions of a denominational office.¹⁶⁵ As this position is put in place, there are a number of ways that accreditation can be simplified.

Table 12

Accreditation Simplification			
	Current	Proposed	
	<i>Uniform Policy</i>	<i>Associate Ordination</i>	<i>Sr. Ordination</i>
Who Interviews	LO&CC Subcommittee or Reg. Candidate Director	Reg. Candidate Director, District Supt. (D.S.) or designee	LO&CC Subcommittee
General Prerequisites	1. Application with multiple references 2. C&MA license 3. Accreditation interview		Associate Ordination
Spiritual Prerequisites	1. Call to fulltime ministry 2. Godly lifestyle 3. Practice of sp. disciplines 4. Passion for evangelism 5. Biblical & theological knowledge		
Denominational Prerequisites	1. Commitment to C&MA 2. C&MA church membership 3. C&MA Lifestyle issue agreement		
		4. Ethical Pledge	
Academic Prerequisites	1. 30 hrs. in Bible, ministry or theology or Ministerial Study Program 2. Academic transcript		
	3. C&MA Polity Course	3. <i>A Movement for God</i>	
Number of categories	6	3	3
Number of ministry titles	24	Local church in consultation with D.S.	
Ministry title assignment	District & National Offices		

Current C&MA accreditation is complicated and time consuming for candidates and administrators. The process must be simplified with a shorter application form and a decrease in the required number of interviewers to a Regional Candidate Director, District Superintendent or designee. A basic understanding of the C&MA must be required such as the reading of a basic book of about the C&MA such as *A Movement*

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Borden in chapter 5 above.

*for God.*¹⁶⁶ However, the multiple assignments of the polity course must move from a licensing prerequisite to an Associate Ordination assignment. Ministry titles must move from approval to reporting to District and National Offices. Titles must be considered a matter for a local church to decide in conjunction with a District Superintendent, similar to the selection of a particular candidate (See Table 12).

C&MA candidates must also subscribe to a common voluntary ecclesiastical ethical standard that reflects common clergy relationships, including ministry changes. This helps with transitions between ministries, including those from international to national ministries and vice versa. This better handles growing life longevity and worldwide connectivity (See Table 12).

The Recommendation Illustrated

To illustrate the simplicity and workability of the proposal, I will present how the recommendation works for me. Under the final alternative above, I complete a simplified application to begin my ministry as Associate Pastor at Blanchard Alliance Church in Wheaton, Illinois. To do this, I demonstrate a basic understanding of the C&MA through reading *A Movement for God* and am interviewed by my District Superintendent, Rev. John Fogal. I sign an ethical pledge which includes an understanding of my relationships within and between his present and future congregations. I am mentored by Rev. John Casey, the senior pastor of my church or by Rev. Clarence Hagar of the nearby Lombard Bible (C&MA) Church during my first two years of ministry. Because I did not go to a C&MA school, I complete the C&MA Polity Course at a one week intensive course at Crown (C&MA) College near St. Paul, Minnesota, concluding with a half-thesis length paper. Because I am new to the C&MA view of sanctification, I complete a supplemental course at Alliance Theological Seminary as recommended by my mentor. When my service is complete and assignments met, I am examined orally by a subcommittee of LO&CC on the basis of his Polity Course paper. I am ordained with Associate Ordination in a

¹⁶⁶ The Christian & Missionary Alliance, *A Movement for God: An Introduction to the History and Thought of the Christian and Missionary Alliance*. (Colorado Springs, CO: National Church Ministries, 1999).

ceremony hosted by the church in Wheaton where I serve. I can prepare for Senior Ordination if I desire to do so or if I am required to by my church or District. However, this is not a C&MA requirement. During this time, I serve under the supervision of a pastor with Senior Ordination, who decides the level of my involvement in public worship. The ethical pledge which I signed at accreditation helps me maintain appropriate pastoral boundaries while I serves in Illinois and to entrust those relationships to his successor when I depart. This pattern continues in my changing ministry settings.

When I move to a senior pastorate at Casco Alliance Church in Casco, Maine, I must begin preparing for Senior Ordination. This involves further mentoring by one with Senior Ordination, Rev. Ed Boon, of the nearby Bridgton Alliance Church. With his aid, I begin to expand my Associate Ordination paper to a full thesis-length paper. As I work toward Senior Ordination, I attend quarterly training at the New England District Office and take a supplemental course at Alliance Theological Seminary in Nyack, New York. At the end of two years of preparation and mentoring, I pass a full oral exam by the LO&CC, based on the paper. The LO&CC conducts a public service of ordination at Casco Alliance Church where I am serving.

My Senior Ordination is sustained during my ministry in the New England District Office. Our primary work with ordination candidates is focused on preaching pastors. This frees up about 60% of the time and resources that everyone in our District, from office staff to LO&CC to District Superintendent, spends on ordination. We focus less on the frustrations of staff pastors and their senior pastors who have other priorities. Instead, we attend to preaching pastors and a few others seeking Senior Ordination, all of whom are highly motivated, We invest the time and money gained from these new procedures in networking, resourcing, and channeling. This leads to growth in pastors and churches to further the mission of the C&MA and the kingdom of God.

I move to my present ministry as Associate Pastor at Alliance Bible Church, a mid-sized congregation in Mequon, Wisconsin, with continued Senior Ordination. If I

come to Mequon without Senior Ordination, I discuss with Rev. Bill Ronzheimer, the Senior Pastor, whether or not the church may require or request it for my senior associate role. Until then, I conduct the ordinances under the supervision of Rev. Ronzheimer.

The limited multiplication of categories process is simple and suitable to the stages of ministry that I experience. It recognizes differences in preparation, roles and positions within the authority structure of the churches and districts in which I serve. The process enables me to move between positions easily and appropriately. Position-appropriate credentialing lessens the workload for the LO&CC of the districts in which I serve. It also connects me with C&MA colleges as a visiting student. All of this helps me and the denomination to work better together and further our common mission.

More to the Story: Further Research

Future studies must test the hypothesis that the relative enormity of C&MA post-appointment ordination requirements is due to early attempts to raise the quality of missionary appointments. Gender and ordination questions must be further examined in view of both leadership initiation rites and the C&MA elder authority definition. Historians must also discover when and why the current program, in place for fifty years or more, began. Ways must further be found to better integrate the practical and theological requirements of the C&MA without losing the quality of preparation. Some of this may be discovered by studying the relationship between ministry effectiveness and theological expertise. Such a study may ironically discover the same disparity between academic and practical readiness which led Simpson to bypass traditional seminary preparation. However, better resulting integration will reinvigorate the C&MA as a movement. Finally, practitioners must examine ways to improve the quality of mentoring which is universally recognized as the key to quality ordination development. This may mean devising an ordination handbook.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁷ Cf. the Wesleyan Church in chapter 3 above. I developed an Ordination Handbook in 2005 for the New England District C&MA which contains some elements of the early chapters of this thesis.

Back to the Mission

The C&MA must adjust its ordination process to fit a changing environment. The biblical and historical stories clearly invite the C&MA to freely adjust the initiation rites of fulltime public church leaders to further its mission. Cross-denominational comparisons show that there are varying ways of practicing ordination. C&MA leaders are open to meaningful change. Multiplying ordination categories and adding a Lay Professional category vastly simplifies accreditation to move the C&MA ahead. Attention must be given to a new generation in the best of C&MA and biblical tradition. To neglect doing so dismisses the new recruits with the greatest contributions to make to its future. The view without them reverses the continuing vision of the Spirit of God. The baton must be passed from past generations in a way that preserves the best of the past without restricting the future. It must also link churches together in ways that accomplish more together, celebrating the name of the Alliance. Every participant, from candidate to C&MA official in the process must be freed to invest most effectively for the kingdom of God.

A.B. Simpson was trained with traditional, theologically-based seminary education. One of the finest preachers of his day, he assumed prominent pulpits in Hamilton, Ontario, and New York City. However, he was struck at the core of his being with a call to bring the gospel worldwide. Realizing as many as possible were needed for the task, Simpson identified Christ-centered faith essentials. He created new avenues to involve the common person in proclaiming Christ, including the first Bible college. Commonly accessible training opened the doors to everyone who wanted to serve. He did not eliminate traditional preparation, but he created new routes for those from varied backgrounds. This flexibility launched a movement that has spread to eighty-eight countries of the world.

Sadly, the movement has flattened out. C&MA churches with strong interest in global missions are not evangelizing at home. Churches reaching their communities are not interested in global missions. Funding for overseas missions has been level for a number of years.

New churches are inspiring established congregations to recover a past mission. New candidates for fulltime ministry contextualize the gospel afresh at home and abroad. Some are in rapidly growing larger churches; some are second career, including those who have arisen from within their own congregations. They are training online or through local schools of sister denominations. Some have come to Christ through their churches, which have admirably trained them in godliness and ministry skills.

The last century has changed the world and the church. Technology links people worldwide in ways that were unthinkable even a generation ago. Deployment and training potential have increased with the growth of global communications and transportation. Life expectancy and prosperity increases produce another army that was inconceivable in Simpson's day. The growth of larger churches has changed the complexion of the church.

A number of years ago, David Rambo, then C&MA President, said it was time to do at home what the church was doing abroad. In response, churches renewed their interest in proclaiming Christ at home. In time, they began building new bridges to the world. Peter Nanfelt, his successor, called for the recovery of a movement. The C&MA developed new overseas paradigms for the good of the denomination. This included inter-mission relationships and increasing flexibility with missionary candidates. It is time to do the same at home by multiplying categories of ordination to reflect a new context. This can be enhanced with an association model for Lay Professionals. A new model for a new day will further the mission of the C&MA, joining with the church worldwide to bring back the King (Matt 24:14).

APPENDIX A

ORDINATION RESEARCH QUESTIONS

District Superintendent,

I would appreciate if you would answer the following research questions, asked with the knowledge and permission of C&MA Church Ministries. I will share the results with you, and the entire doctoral thesis-project with Church Ministries and, upon request, with others. Please send your response to my email, fax or mailing address.

With Thanks, [author's name & contact information]

Ordination is the Church's public recognition of the call from God, distinct from human vocational choice, to men for a lifetime ministry, through speech and exemplary lifestyle, of preaching and teaching the Word of God, protecting God's people from spiritual enemies and doctrinal heresies, overseeing and promoting the spiritual development of God's people, and equipping God's people to fulfill the Great Commission to "make disciples of all nations" for the purpose of knowing and glorifying God by obeying His will and building His Kingdom. The occasion for setting men apart for such ministry is the Church's affirmation of the candidate's faithful completion of preparation for ordination through approved education, in-service training, field experience with mentoring for a minimum of two years, and examination by a qualified council of peers.

--Uniform Policy on Ordination, C&MA Manual, March 2005

1. How well does a uniform (singular) system of ordination as found above presently utilize the time & resources of the following? (*select 1 per item & so on, below*)

- District Office

<i>Negatively</i>		<i>No Effect</i>		<i>Positively</i>
1	2	3	4	5
- Licensing, Ordination, & Consecration Council

<i>Negatively</i>		<i>No Effect</i>		<i>Positively</i>
1	2	3	4	5

- Candidates

<i>Negatively</i>		<i>No Effect</i>		<i>Positively</i>
-------------------	--	------------------	--	-------------------

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Comment:

2. Should the C&MA have varieties of ordination/consecration for differing types of ministry?

<i>No</i>	<i>Probably Not</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Possibly</i>	<i>Yes</i>
-----------	---------------------	---------------	-----------------	------------

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Comment:

3. How well would a system of ordination/consecration that varies according to types of ministry utilize time & resources?

<i>Negatively</i>		<i>No Effect</i>		<i>Positively</i>
-------------------	--	------------------	--	-------------------

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Comment:

4. If the C&MA system of ordination/consecration varied according to types of ministry, how many categories should there be? _____

- What categories would you recommend?

Comment:

How many candidates for ordination/consecration do you presently have?

- How does the number of candidates compare to past numbers?

<i>Much Less</i>	<i>Less</i>	<i>About the Same</i>	<i>More</i>	<i>Many More</i>
1	2	3	4	5

- How does the percentage of ordination/consecration candidates that are not senior pastors compare to the past?

<i>Much Less</i>	<i>Less</i>	<i>About the Same</i>	<i>More</i>	<i>Much</i>
<i>Greater</i>				
1	2	3	4	5

Comment:

5. Other:

Name:

District:

Thank you!

APPENDIX B

ORDINATION RESEARCH COMPILATION

(distributed August 28 & October 12, 2007)

Survey Responses

16 out of 22 geographic districts (73%)

0 out of 7 ethnic districts (0%)

16 out of 29 combined ethnic & geographic districts (55%)

1. How well does a uniform (singular) system of ordination as found above¹⁶⁸ presently utilize the time & resources of the following? (*select 1 per item & so on, below*)

- District Office (Range 2 to 5; average 4.09; median 4; mode¹⁶⁹ 4)

Negatively

No Effect

Positively

1

2

3

4

5

¹⁶⁸ The Christian & Missionary Alliance, Uniform Policy on Ordination, *Manual of the C&MA*, updated 1/12/07, <https://my.cmalliance.org/resources/books/manual/manual.jsp> (accessed August 30, 2007).

¹⁶⁹ Central tendency –Most frequent response

- Licensing, Ordination, & Consecration Council (Range 2 to 5; average 4.25; median 4; mode 4.5)

Negatively *No Effect* *Positively*

1 2 3 4 5

- Candidates (range – 1 to 5; average 3.7; median 4; mode 4)

Negatively *No Effect* *Positively*

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

- i. Some candidates view ordination as unnecessary and burdensome.
- ii. If I understand the question properly, a single system for ordination across all districts allows for respect of one's ordination wherever he serves in the C&MA, and for the LOCC to focus on tuning and emphasis without re-writing the whole procedure—which some members might want to do. I feel it's essential.
- iii. I am not sure what you are trying to get at in this question, but I am saying the uniform program serves fairly well but would be better if more individualized training were designed for each candidate. Some things need to be uniform to insure quality of doctrine, character, etc.

but an individualized program to develop each one's ministry to overcome weaknesses and utilize strengths would be better.

- iv. If each district were left on their own there may be confusion and chaos, with no generalized standard. Some may enter a particular district because the standards are greatly reduced compared to another district.
- v. Far too many hoops, few questions or assessment of philosophy, genuine health, mission alignment, & actual mission reality.
- vi. See below.
- vii. The younger, emerging generation is not turned in to (as a general rule) to "uniform" anything.
- viii. Candidates don't know anything any different or even what to expect. They simply receive the criteria and run with it (and sometimes we run behind and prod them along
- ix. The Uniform nature of our policy saves us much time because we don't have to reinvent the wheel from one district to another. It also represents a safeguard that each district is maintaining at least the same minimum level of standards for those who are pursuing ordination/consecration. It benefits candidates in that they can easily transfer from one district to another without having to jump through additional hoops.
- x. Uniform Preparation and Tracking is advantageous for all concerned. Individuals are equally considered.

xi. It helps us to have the same set of readings, requirements. Those do need to be reviewed regularly, however, since books go out of print, become outdated, etc.

2. Should the C&MA have varieties of ordination/consecration for differing types of ministry? (range 1 to 5; average 3.5; median of 4; mode 4)

<i>No</i>	<i>Probably Not</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Possibly</i>	<i>Yes</i>
1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

- i. The “one size fits all” is difficult. It is also made more difficult by some IRS requirements for ministerial recognition and benefit.
- ii. The call to ministry unfolds, and it would be most difficult to require additional mentoring by the district each time God moves a person to another type of ministry.
- iii. I believe ordination is from God based on gift and call as shown by effectiveness. The church would do well to ordain each accordingly. Thus some would be ordained as Children’s Workers, Youth Workers, Music and Worship Arts Workers, Administrative Workers, Missionaries, College Professors, Pastoral Care Workers, Counselors, etc.
- iv. Perhaps for worship pastors, chaplains, etc.

- v. Too many “directors” with little possibilities, so they drop out. Far too daunting overall.
- vi. At least Sr. Pastor & Teaching Pastors with oversight authority and all other staff requirements for them should be higher & more intensely theological.
- vii. I believe that for example we need for example a different track for guys doing worship; youth ministry; assistant pastor. Problem is once ordained, a guy could move into Senior Pastor without proper preparation.
- viii. E.g. counseling, youth pastors, other ministries that are emerging in the church.
- ix. My concern is that we not give in to the temptation of “dumbing-down” ministry as a calling and a profession.
- x. We don’t believe varieties of ordination/consecration is as much the issue as is the delivery system of the training in relation to various types of ministry. If there were different types of ordination/consecration, the process could be designed to better match the type of ministry which could alleviate some of the frustration experienced by those who feel as if the system is “one size fits all.” However, having different levels of ordination and/or consecration would necessitate a further process which individuals would have to go through if they sensed God’s call to a different type of ministry. For instance, we have some senior pastors who used to be worship

pastors. A different level of ordination would have necessitated some type of process to sustain or grant ordination as a Senior Pastor.

- xi. Individuals may change ministry emphasis during their careers so having a broad ordination preparation should benefit each one.
- xii. I am in favor of all new licensed persons being provisional first, and moving to full licensure at ord/con. There is currently no difference in the "privileges" between those in any license category. That needs to be revisited.

3. How well would a system of ordination/consecration that varies according to types of ministry utilize time & resources? (range 1 to 5; average 3.17; median of 3; mode of 4)

Negatively

No Effect

Positively

1

2

3

4

5

Comments:

- i. Uncertain how to answer.
- ii. It would be a nightmare for administration. Continuing education should be the way people prepare for their next or present ministry. You need only be set aside for the gospel ministry once.
- iii. It would be more effective, in my opinion.
- iv. I personally believe it would take more work and effort to enforce a variety of standards.

- v. Not sure until attempted. Probably would not effect.
- vi. Would depend on the person.
- vii. Seems to me like we would be asking Superintendents and LO&CC's to track so many differing criteria that it would confusing and complicated.
- viii. As stated above, the process could be designed to better match the type of ministry which could alleviate some of the frustration experienced by those who feel as if the system is "one size, fits all." This would help the district office, LOCC and the candidate be more productive in dealing with the core vital issues of ordination or consecration.
- ix. In addition to the District Office & LO&CC nightmare of organizing and tracking various ordination tracks, it may present additional challenges to secure appropriate mentors for candidates who will take their time for additional study in order to adequately mentor candidates.
- x. While I don't think different categories of ordination are necessary, it would be appropriate to grant an IRS approved level of licensing for worship pastors who have no interest in the preaching, teaching side of things, yet their sacerdotal involvement in the planning and execution of a worship service should qualify them for the housing allowance benefit. I get most push back from this area. Those who are seminary trained want to go through with ordination. Those who are primarily musicians, have little interest in doing the necessary work. A few

times, they have had very little Bible or theology, which to me is not good, but that is what senior pastors and church leadership boards hired.

- xi. The more complicated it becomes, the more difficult to administer with limited time and staff.

- 4. If the C&MA system of ordination/consecration varied according to types of ministry, how many categories should there be?

(range – 0 to 8; average 3.3; median – 3; mode of 2.5; 3 without response)

What categories would you recommend?

- i. Senior pastor, specialized associates (children, youth, music).
- ii. Children's Workers, Youth Workers, Music and Worship Arts Workers, Administrative Workers, Missionaries, College Professors, Pastoral Care Workers, Counselors, etc. (taken from above).
- iii. According to role groups & assessments.
- iv. I disagree with the concept.
- v. See my earlier comment for a partial list.
- vi. Senior pastor, worship pastor, missionary.
- vii. Senior Pastor/elder oversight authority, (2) All others, (3) IF you move from youth to sr. – added requirements.
- viii. See Above (I believe that for example we need for example a different track for guys doing worship; youth ministry; assistant

pastor. Problem is once ordained, a guy could move into Senior Pastor without proper preparation.)

- ix. I would have to give more thought to this. Probably a survey should be done of what ministries there are and then decide what ministries are ordainable.
- x. Preaching/non-preaching. Our LO&CC believes that worship pastors should be held to the same high standard of theological training and education as the preaching pastor. They set the table for the proclamation of the Word, they need to be theologically sound.
- xi. Second Career.
- xii. (One answer)
 - a. Ordained Senior/Solo Pastor
 - b. Ordained/Consecrated Official Worker
- xiii. If we add categories for every different role or type of ministry, we will create an unending list that will highly complicate our system with very little benefit. As we began to explore different possibilities, we came up with a list of 10 very quickly. The two categories suggested allows for a differentiation in the roles of ordained or consecrated workers in regard to Senior/solo pastor, in agreement with the elder authority position of The C&MA.

xiv. Individuals should be prepared as the Lord may desire to change them from their current “comfort zone” to a different ministry (such as Youth Pastor to Senior Pastor, etc.).

xv. Pastoral Vocational

5. How many candidates for ordination/consecration do you presently have?

(range – 10 to 60; average 29; median 25.5; mode of 20)

- How does the number of candidates compare to past numbers? (range 2-5; average 3.13; median 3; mode of 3)

<i>Much Less</i>	<i>Less</i>	<i>About the Same</i>	<i>More</i>	<i>Many More</i>
1	2	3	4	5

- How does the percentage of ordination/consecration candidates that are not senior pastors compare to the past? (range 3-5; average 3.63; median 3; mode 3)

<i>Much Less</i>	<i>Less</i>	<i>About the Same</i>	<i>More</i>	<i>Much Greater</i>
1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

- i. Our numbers and categories vary but remain within the 20-30 range from year to year.
- ii. When the (ethnic) District merged with the (our) District, we had about 20 men to take through ordination. We also had several who had not been required to finish in a timely manner. Those issues are now resolved.

- iii. More teams, internships/apprenticeships with no plans for a lead role.
- iv. Only 2 of 37 are senior pastors. As our churches continue to grow and add staff, the number of individuals in ordination/consecration has mushroomed over the last 8 years. 40% of our official workers are in the ordination/consecration track.
- v. We have more large churches now and more multiple staff.
- vi. More churches are adding staff positions. Our numbers follow the waves of ministry openings of our district. We have had up to 30 in the program in previous years. There are also less unordained candidates who are willing to serve in a solo/senior position at the start. Additionally, less churches are willing to consider inexperienced candidates for solo pastoral ministry.
- vii. Usually there are more “staff” personnel than “senior pastors.” Of course, now there are more WOMEN in the Consecration track.
- viii. The district did not put much emphasis on completing the process for some years, so I inherited a backlog of candidates. We have streamlined the process for the 20 or so who have gone more than nine years (with Church Ministries approval).

6. Other:

- i. Rather than numerous varieties of ordination/consecration categories, we believe that an agreed upon core curriculum that all districts would use, along with greater flexibility in “other” requirements for

ordination/consecration might care for the need without multiplying categories. There would be one or two categories, but numerous paths (all having the same core curriculum/requirements, but differing in application or ministry specific areas).

- ii. The C&MA offers National training for Youth Pastors, Disciplemaking Ministries personnel, etc. which provides excellent preparation for these specialized ministry personnel. In addition to ordination preparation, candidates have these additional training events that may be reflected as partial credit for their Ordination/Consecration In-Service Training requirements.

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE CODE OF MINISTERIAL ETHICS¹⁷⁰

As a minister of Jesus Christ, called by God to proclaim the Gospel, and gifted by the Spirit, I dedicate myself to conduct my ministry in accord with the Statement of Faith of the (denomination) and the church to which I am called.

I will constantly prepare myself in body, mind and spirit for the task to which God has called me.

I will safeguard the good image of the Christian ministry by living honestly, not seeking special financial privileges or gratuities and avoiding embarrassing debts while giving faithfully to the work of the Lord.

I will, if a full-time minister, confer with church leaders before accepting remuneration for work other than that normally associated with the pastorate.

I will seek to build up the church without discrediting other churches or ministries.

I will balance my family commitments and church duties properly.

¹⁷⁰ Adapted directly from American Baptist Churches USA, “The Covenant & Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches,” amen. 10-04, <http://www.ministerscouncil.com/WhoWeAre/documents/CodeEngAmended2004.pdf> (accessed September 8, 2007). Similar statements are noted in chapter 3 above by the Baptist General Conference and the Presbyterian Church of America.

I will keep all appropriate confidences shared with me in counseling sessions and other ministry contexts except in cases where disclosure is permitted or required by law.

I will be truthful in my speech, never plagiarizing another's work or communicating gossip.

I will keep my life morally pure by refusing to engage in any form of pornography or become romantically or sexually involved in any relationship which is in violation of Biblical standards of morality.

I will exercise the authority of a servant-leader who influences others through love and understanding and who humbly acknowledges dependence upon God, putting the interests of others above my own.

I will, if I serve in an Associate Pastor role, support the leadership of the Senior Pastor and not undermine his ministry in public settings or private conversations with others.

I will, if serving with a multiple staff, show respect for other ministers and staff members and shall encourage and work with them as members of a team.

I will seek the fellowship of the pastors of the (denomination).

I will encourage participation in the mission and ministry of the (region) and denomination in which I serve.

I will not intentionally cause division within the congregation I serve. If I resign or am asked to resign I will not seek to provide pastoral leadership for any new church that may develop in the same community unless approved by the (regional office).

Upon my resignation, I will sever my pastoral relations with the church and shall not make pastoral contacts of any kind with the members of the church(es) whom I formally served without the knowledge and consent of the pastor(s).

I will obey the laws of my government as long as they do not conflict with the laws of God and will practice Christian citizenship without engaging in partisan or political activities that would discredit the integrity of the ministry.

I, _____, am in full and complete agreement with the (denomination) Statement of Faith and Code of Ministerial Ethics and agree to them without reservation. I further covenant and pledge with my colleagues in the (denomination) ministry to keep the Code of Ministerial Ethics. If at any time I should cease to agree with the Statement of Faith or the Code of Ministerial Ethics, I will resign my position as a minister with the (denomination). I also acknowledge that, should I cease to agree with the Statement of Faith or act in such a manner as to

violate the Code of Ministerial Ethics, that this will be grounds for the withdrawal of credentials as a minister within the (denomination).

Signature _____ Date _____

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VITA

Lee K. Nanfelt was born on October 10, 1958 in Middleborough, Massachusetts. He grew up in Lakeville, Massachusetts. He studied at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, graduating with a diploma in Pastoral Studies with a Greek emphasis in 1979. He then studied at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois, where he received a bachelors degree in Social Sciences with a Psychology emphasis in 1981. He was a special student at Wheaton Graduate School in Wheaton, Illinois in 1981. He enrolled that year at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, where he received his Master of Divinity in 1983. From 1983 to 1989, he served as Assistant Pastor at Blanchard Road Alliance Church in Wheaton, Illinois. After this, he was Pastor at Casco Alliance Church in Casco, Maine from 1989 to 2001. He then became Assistant to the District Superintendent of the New England District of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA) from 2001 to 2007 in South Easton, MA. He has been Associate Pastor for Adult Ministries at Alliance Bible Church in Mequon, Wisconsin since 2007. Mr. Nanfelt and his wife, Maureen, live in Cedarburg, Wisconsin. They have four children. This project is presented in partial fulfillment for the degree of Doctor of Ministry from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary of South Hamilton, Massachusetts. He began the program in January 2005 and plans to graduate in May 2008.